

OUTLINES OF THE  
History Of Classical Sanskrit Literature

by

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**Samskrita Sahitya Sadana**

2, DEVAPARTHIVA ROAD, CHAMARAJAPURAM  
MYSORE — 4

FIRST EDITION 1961  
REVISED & ENLARGED EDITION 1964

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2, DEVAPARTEHIVA ROAD, CHAMARAJAPURAM, MYSORE - 4

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OUTLINES OF THE HISTORY OF  
**CLASSICAL SANSKRIT LITERATURE**

श्लाघ्यः स एव गुणवान् रागद्वेषबहिष्कृतः ।  
भूतार्थकथने यस्य स्थेयस्थेव सरस्वती ॥

—Rājatarāṅgiṇī I 7

## CHAPTER I

## STAGES OF SANSKRIT LITERATURE

Sanskrit is the name loosely applied to the ancient language of India. Strictly speaking the word Sanskrit should denote only that form of the language which has been in vogue in India since about the time of Pānini. The earlier phase of the language is the 'Vedic.' The later phase is usually called the 'Classical Sanskrit' to distinguish it from the Vedic Sanskrit. These two, viz., the vedic and the classical, are two distinct stages of the same language. They differ from each other considerably. Therefore proficiency in the classical Sanskrit does not mean proficiency in the Vedic also. Corresponding to these two stages of the language, there are two stages of its literature, viz., 1) Vedic literature and 2) Classical literature. It is not possible to fix up dates or time limits for these literatures for want of definite chronology. We can only say that the classical period commences a few centuries before Christ and that the Vedic period is somewhat prior to that of the Classical.<sup>1</sup>

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1. The vedic and classical periods are not in strict chronological succession. They, in fact, overlap each other to some extent. It would be a mistake to say that the Classical Sanskrit literature came into being at the close of the Vedic period and that it is a natural development of the Vedic.

## THE VEDIC LITERATURE

Vedas are four in number, viz., the *Rgveda*, the *Yajurveda*, the *Sāmaveda* and the *Atharvaveda*. Each of these Vedas has a *Samhita* part and a *Brahmaṇa* part. The latter portions of the *Brāhmaṇas* are called *Āraṇyakas*. Appended to these *Āraṇyakas* there are the *Upaniṣads* of the respective Vedas. All these, together with the several *Sūtra* works pertaining to the different Vedas, form the Vedic literature.

The *Samhitas* are collections of hymns or mantras addressed to different deities. These mantras are poetical in matter and form, and their chief significance lies in their mythology. The *Brāhmaṇas* deal with the application of these hymns in the performance of sacrifices. These are prosaic and written in prose. Besides ritual precepts and discussions on the same, the *Brāhmaṇas* contain *itihāsa* (myths and legends), *purāṇa* (cosmogonic myths), *gāthā* (epic song verses) and *nārās'amsi* (songs in praise of heroes).<sup>2</sup>

THE *ĀRAṇYAKAS* are so called as they comprise of such secret and uncanny matters as would spell danger to the uninitiated and which are therefore to be taught and learnt only in the forests and not in the villages or towns. The main contents of these texts are the mysticism and symbolism of sacrifice and priestly philosophy.

THE *Upaniṣads* are appended to the *Āraṇyakas* in such a way that it is difficult to draw the

2. This shows that the beginnings of epic poetry go back into the period of the *Brāhmaṇas*.

line between them. These *Upaniṣads* are called the *Vedānta*—the end of the *Veda*. Chronologically these belong to the end of the Vedic period. These were taught to the student only at the end, i.e., after the *Mantra* and *Brāhmaṇa* were given out to him. The *Upaniṣads* are again usually recited only at the end of a Vedic recital. Further, the aim of the *Veda* is in the doctrines of the *Upaniṣads*, according to philosophers. Thus, in more senses than one, the *Upaniṣads* formed the *Vedānta* and came to be called by that name.

**THE SŪTRAS**—The *Upaniṣads* mention two kinds of knowledge, namely, (1) knowledge of the *Brahman* and (2) knowledge of the *Vedas* and *Vedāngas*.<sup>3</sup> These were first taught within the Vedic schools themselves. Discussions on matters concerning these are found along with the explanations of the rituals in the *Brāhmaṇas* and *Āranyakas*. But, in course of time, they came to be treated as independent subjects. Thus evolved concise texts treating each of these subjects in a systematic manner and in a peculiarly brief prose style intended for easy memorization. These are the *Sūtra* works. The oldest *Sūtra* texts are full of quotations from the *Brāhmaṇas* and contain many *Brāhmaṇa*-like passages, indicating thereby that the *Sūtra* style was developed from the prose of the *Brāhmaṇas*.

In this section we are concerned only with

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3. These are six in number, viz.,—1) *SIKṢĀ* (phonetics), 2) *VYĀKARĀNA* (grammar), 3) *CHANDAS* (metrics), 4) *NIRUKTA* (etymology), 5) *JYOTIṢA* (astronomy) and 6) *KALPA* (ritual).

the Kalpa Sūtras. Generally each sākhā (school) has its own kalpa-sūtras. These are manuals treating ritual precepts (Kalpa) in a systematic manner and they are three-fold;—1) S'RAUTA and S'ULVA 2) GRHYA 3) DHARMA. The S'rauta sūtras pertain to major ceremonies such as the Somayāga. The S'ulva sūtras are attached to the S'rauta sūtras directly. These contain exact rules for the measurement and building of a sacrificial place, fire-altar etc. The Grhya sūtras deal with the several saṃskāras from a person's conception in the mother's womb to his death and even after the death—the S'rāddhas. The Dharma sūtras give rules and regulations governing the duties of the castes and āśramas.

### THE VEDIC AGE

Indian tradition holds that the 'Mantras and Brāhmaṇas were not composed by anyone, but were revealed by God. They are therefore beginningless and eternal. The Ṛsis are only the seers of the mantras (मन्त्रद्रष्टारः न तु कर्त्तारः). As such, the question of either the authorship or the date of the Vedas does not at all arise.<sup>4</sup> Only the Sūtras are believed to have been composed by human authors. Western and modern Indian scholars have a different view. According to them, the Aryans who came to India from central Asia or so (through perhaps the Khyber Pass) and first settled down in the Punjab, imbibed the local culture and poured forth hymns addressed to

4. मन्त्रब्राह्मणानामेव वेदनामधेयत्वम् ।

5. Vedas are अपौरुषेय and नित्य ।

various gods in their religious meditative state and that those hymns put together formed the mantras of the Rgveda. The Rgveda<sup>6</sup> was followed by the Yajurveda, Sāmaveda and the Atharvaveda.<sup>7</sup> This Vedic literature of India is accepted by all as the oldest literature in the world, of which written documents are available. But regarding the date or the age of the Vedas, opinions differ. If according to Prof. Macdonell Vedic literature covers the period between 1500 B.C. and 200 B.C., Prof. Jacobi of Bonn assigns to the Vedas a period much earlier than 4000 B.C.

6. All the four Vedas were originally mixed up as a whole. It was probably in a period earlier than 1500 B.C. that the Veda was divided into four by Vyāsa in accordance with the functions of the four types of priests, namely, Hotṛ, Adhvaryu, Udgātṛ and Brahma. The hymns that were put to song were collected under the Sāmaveda; the prosaic texts dealing with ritual were collected under the Yajurveda; and the hymns pertaining to indigenous practices came under the Atharvaveda.

It should be noted that the Veda was called ऋगी — a collection of three, namely, the first three Vedas. The fourth (Atharvaveda) must have secured recognition as a Veda only at a late period.

7. Even before the Āryans came into India, the native people of the country had their own religious practices. They knew several charms and medicinal herbs. The Āryans adopted all these, gave them a religious form and assigned to them a place in the Atharvaveda. Thus, this Veda, in reality based on the Rgveda, containing the native sorceries, mantras, abhicāras, medicinal herbs and divine rites, has become the source of Āyurveda, Tantras and other Upavedas.

## THE VEDIC AND CLASSICAL LITERATURE

Vedic literature is almost wholly religious, whereas the classical includes secular subjects. While the Vedic is in both prose and verse, the classical employs verse mostly and its metres, although based on those of the Vedas, are different from them in essential respects. The quality of every syllable of the classical metres is determined to make them less elastic and to make later poetry quite perfect. The Vedic is in a language having a natural and free development and is therefore not quite uniform; whereas, the classical, which is in a language bound down hand and foot by the grammatical rules of Pāṇini and other grammarians, being more refined, is uniform and almost stereotyped. While the style of the Vedic works is spontaneous, simple and lucid, that of the classical is artificial. Thus the two literatures differ from each other both in matter and form.

## CHAPTER II

### THE EPICS

Sanskrit epic poetry may be divided into two main classes on the basis of their style—

- A ) Itihāsa,<sup>1</sup> Ākhyāna<sup>2</sup> and Purāṇa ( comprising of old stories ) such as the Mahābhārata.
- B ) Kāvya (ornate poems or artificial epics) such as the Rāmāyaṇa.

The term Itihāsa which occurs in Vedic literature refers probably to the legendary passages in the Brāhmaṇas and not to any distinct works. Such legends are mostly in prose and sometimes in verse. The Rgveda also contains a few narrative passages. These and the above mentioned legends are the fore-runners of the epic poetry. No doubt there is a wide gulf between these ancient Itihāsas and the Mahābhārata, there being no work of the intervening period coming down to us.

The transmission of these epic legends is usually connected with the sūtas,—a class which supplied charioteers, heroes and professional minstrels.

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- 1. Itihāsa=legend; Ākhyāna=narrative; Purāṇa=ancient tale. See A.C. Macdonell's History of Skt. Lit. page 281. इति+ह+आस = Thus it was. The word ऐतिह्य is derived from इति ह. Ākhyāna is described thus—

स्वयं दृष्ट्वार्थकथनं प्राहुराख्यानकं बुधाः ।  
श्रुतस्यार्थस्यकथनमुपाख्यानं प्रचक्षते ॥

- 2. Cf. ....एतत्पुरावृत्तमाख्यानं भद्रमस्तु वः— रामायण 6-131-122.

## A (1). THE MAHĀBHĀRATA

The Mahābhārata is the earliest example available of Itihāsa. The work is called Mahābhārata mainly because it describes the great battle between the rival descendants of Bharata who is held by tradition as the first emperor of India. The most striking feature of this work is its stupendous size.<sup>3</sup> It deals with a great variety of topics and contains more than a lakh of s'lokas and is by far the largest poem<sup>4</sup> known to literary history. The comparison of this work to the ocean and the Himālayas is not inappropriate.

यथा समुद्रो भगवान् यथा च हिमवान् गिरिः ।  
रुद्रातावुभौ रक्षनिधी तथा भारतसुन्ध्यते ॥

The Mahābhārata contains 2109 chapters and is divided into 18 books called PARVAS which are of very unequal length. Several of them are further divided into subordinate books called AVĀNTARA-PARVAS. It has a supplement, namely Hari-

3. It is said in the Mahābhārata, Ādiparva, chapter 1 stanzas 269-71, that the gods weighed the Mahābhārata and the Vedas in a balance and found that the Mahābhārata was heavier than all the Vedas. In bulk also the Mahābhārata was larger. Therefore, it came to be called Mahābhārata. पुंरा किल सुरैः सर्वैः समेत्य तुलया धृतम् ।

चतुर्भ्यैः सरहस्येभ्यो वेदेभ्यो ह्यधिकं यदा ॥

तदा प्रभूति लोकेऽस्मिन् महाभारतसुन्ध्यते ।

महत्वे च गुरुत्वे च ग्रियमाणं यशोऽधिकम् ॥

महत्वात् भारतत्वाच्च महाभारतसुन्ध्यते ॥

4. The Mahābhārata is eight times the Illyad and Odyssey put together.

vains'a, which gives a full account of the life and family of S'rī Kṛṣṇa.

M. Williams gives the following brief statement of the contents of the eighteen Books which constitute the poem:—

1. **ADI-PARVAN** 'Introductory Book,' describes how the two brothers, Dhritarashtra and Pandu, are brought up by their uncle Bhishma; and how Dhritarashtra, who is blind, has one hundred sons, commonly called the Kuru princes, by his wife Gandhari; and how the two wives of Pandu, Pritha (Kunti) and Madri, have five sons called the Pandavas or Pandu princes.

2. **SABHA-PARVAN** describes the great **SABHA** or 'assembly of princes' at Hastinapura, when Yudhisthira, the eldest of the five Pandavas, is persuaded to play at dice with Sakuni and loses his kingdom. The five Pandavas and Draupadi, their wife, are required to live for twelve years in the woods.

3. **VANA-PARVAN** narrates the life of the Pandavas in the Kamyaka forest. This is one of the longest books, and full of episodes such as the story of Nala and that of the Kiratarjuniya.

4. **VIRATA-PARVAN** describes the thirteenth year of exile and the adventures of the Pandavas while living disguised in the service of king Virata.

5. **UDYOGA-PARVAN**: In this the preparations for war on the side of both Pandavas and Kauravas are described.

6. **BHISHMA-PARVAN**: In this both armies join battle on Kurukshetra, a plain north-west of Delhi. The Kauravas are commanded by Bhishma, who falls transfixed with arrows by Arjuna.

7. **DRONA-PARVAN**: In this the Kuru forces are commanded by Drona, and numerous battles take place. Drona falls in a fight with Dhristadyumna (son of Drupada).

8. **KARNA-PARVAN**: In this Kurus are led by Karna. Other battles are described. Arjuna kills Karna.

9. **SALYA-PARVAN**: In this Salya is made general of the Kuru army. The concluding battles take place, and only three of the Kuru warriors, with Duryodhana, are left alive. Bhima and Duryodhana then fight with clubs. Duryodhana, chief and eldest of the Kurus, is struck down.

10. **SAUPTIKA-PARVAN**: In this three surviving Kurus make a night attack on the camp of the Pandavas and kill all their army, but not the five Pandavas.

11. **STRI-PARVAN** describes the lamentations of queen Gandhari and the other women over the bodies of the slain heroes.

12. **SANTI-PARVAN**: In this Yudhisthira is crowned in Hastinapura. To calm his spirit, troubled with the slaughter of his kindred, Bhishma, still alive, instructs him at great length in the duties of kings (*Rajadharma* 1995-4778), rules for adversity (*Apad Dharma* 4779-6445), rules for attaining final emancipation (*Moksha Dharma* 6456 to end).

13. **ANUSASANA-PARVAN**: In this the instruction is continued by Bhishma, who gives precepts and wise axioms on all subjects, such as the duties of the kings, liberality, fasting, eating &c., mixed up with tales, moral and religious discourses, and metaphysical disquisitions. At the conclusion of his long sermon, Bhishma dies.

14. **ASVAMEDHIKA-PARVAN**: In this Yudhishthira, having assumed the government, performs an Asvamedha or 'horse sacrifice' in token of his supremacy.

15. **ASRAMAYASIKA-PARVAN** narrates how the old blind king Dhritarashtra, with his queen Gandhari and with Kunti, mother of the Pandavas, retires to a hermitage in the woods. After two years, a forest conflagration takes place, and they immolate themselves in the fire to secure heaven and felicity.

16. MAUSALA-PARVAN narrates the death of Krishna and Balarama, their return to heaven, the submergence of Krishna's city Dvaraka by the sea, and the self slaughter in a fight with clubs of Krishna's family, the Yadavas, through the curse of some Brahmins.

17. MAHAPRASTHANIKA-PARVAN describes the renunciation of their kingdom by Yudhishthira and his four brothers, and their departure towards Indra's heaven in Mount Meru.

18. SVARGAROHANIKA-PARVAN narrates the ascent and admission to heaven of the five Pandavas, their wife Draupadi and kindred.<sup>5</sup>

STYLE—The Mahābhārata is written mostly in the Anuṣṭup which being peculiarly suited to a long poem is usually termed the epic s'loka. Other metres also are introduced here and there. There are prose narratives also in between but they are few.<sup>6</sup> Although the language is the same as the classical, it reveals more freedom. The style is powerful but simple and direct. In some parts it rises to an imaginative pitch and becomes highly poetical. The Vanaparva, it may be said here, is a store-house of episodes which are most fascinating in the whole work. Throughout the work there runs a human interest, although the supernatural element is freely introduced. The didactic sections of the epic, which arrest the

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5. Reproduced from M. Krishnamachariar's A History of classical Sanskrit Literature.

6. The prose passages are twenty in number;—three in the Ādiparva, seven in the Vanaparva, seven in the Sāntiparva and, three in the Anusāsanaparva. All these are Upākhyānas narrated by the sages.

attention of the readers, are full of pretty statements pregnant with meaning.

**STRUCTURE AND AUTHORSHIP**—'Vyāsa is the author of the Mahābhārata. He is mentioned as a contemporary of the Kauravas and Pāndavas and as having narrated in the Mahābhārata incidents just as he had witnessed them, as they had occurred in the past and as they stood at the time.<sup>8</sup> Ganes'a is said to have taken down the poem, while Vyāsa went on composing it. The time taken by Vyāsa to complete the work is stated as three years.<sup>9</sup>

The Varāhapurāṇa mentions that Vyāsa wrote the Mahābhārata at the end of the Dvāpara and the beginning of the Kaliyuga. According to the Bhāgavata, Kṛṣṇa died on the first day of Kali. The Mahābhārata itself declares that Vyāsa has

7. Kṛṣṇa is his correct name. He came to be called *Vedavyāsa* as he arranged the Vedas in their present form. विव्यास वेदान् यस्मात् तस्मात् व्यास इति स्मृतः ।—MB I-64-130). As he was born in an island he got the name Dvaipāyana. Being the son of Parāś'ara, he was known as Pārāś'arya. He was called Kānīna as he was born of a Kanyā, i.e., an unwed girl. His other names, viz, Bādarāyaṇa and Vāsiṣṭha were because of his residence in Badarikās'rama and his relationship with Vasiṣṭha. Kṛṣṇa—dvaipāyana—Vyāsa is the full name by which he is generally referred to.

8. कुरुराजकुलस्थानं दृष्टं ब्रुत्तं च यत् स्थितम् ।

तत्सर्वं भगवान् व्यासो वर्णयामास भारते । — पद्मपुराण

9 त्रिभिर्वर्षैः सदोत्थायी कृष्णद्वैषायनो मुनिः ।

महाभारतमाख्यानं कृतवानिदमुत्तमम् ॥ — आदिपर्व 62-55

described in the work the <sup>10</sup>greatness of Vāsudeva (Kṛṣṇa), the truthfulness of the Pāṇdavas and the misconduct of the sons of Dhṛitarāṣṭra. Nilakantha, the most reputed commentator of the Mahābhārata, stresses this in the introduction to his commentary of every Parva.

The poem composed thus by Vyāsa was called JAYĀ.<sup>11</sup> It is believed that the five pupils of Vyāsa, viz., Sūmantu, Jaimini, Paila, S'uka and Vaisampāyana, gave publicity to the work in their own way after the death of the Kauravas and Pāṇdavas. Of these five, only two are now available. They are, (i) the one related by Vaisampāyana which is complete and the (ii) other of Jaimini which is a fragment containing only the As'vamedhaparva.

It is mentioned in the Mahābhārata that Vaisampāyana read out this Ākhyāna of Vyāsa during the Sarpayāga performed by Janamejaya and that he also supplied certain details and explanations throughout, at the request of Janamejaya. The original Jayā together with these details took the form of 'Bhārata samhitā'. It further adds that the SAUTI who had heard this BHĀRATASAMHITĀ from Vaisampāyana related it to S'aunaka at the Naimisāranya, adding more details and illustrations. The 'BHĀRATASAMHITĀ' together with this new material took the form of the present Mahābhārata.

10. वासुदेवस्य माहात्म्यं पाण्डवानां च सत्यताम् ।

दुर्वृत्तें धार्तीराष्ट्राणामुक्तवान् भगवानुषिः ॥ — आदिपर्व 1-76

11. नारायणं नमस्कृत्य नरं चैव नरोत्तमम् ।

देवीं सैरखतीं चैव ततो जयमुदीरयेत् ॥ — आदिपर्व 1-1

There are plenty of internal evidences to show that the short original epic of Vyāsa went through at least three stages of development. To mention some of the evidences—

1. The epic has three different names, viz., Jayā,<sup>13</sup> Bhāratasamhitā<sup>14</sup> and Mahābhārata.<sup>15</sup>
2. There are three different invocatory verses.
3. Three different sections of the Epic are spoken of as the commencement<sup>16</sup> of the work.
4. The Epic gives three different figures<sup>17</sup> in three different contexts, as the total number of verses it contains.
5. The material<sup>18</sup> of the Epic is of a triple character, viz., (a) the narrative part (b) the ethical

12. जयो नामेतिहासोऽयं श्रोतव्यो विजिगीषुणा — आदिपर्व 62-22

13. चतुर्विंशतिसाहस्रीं चक्रे भारतसंहिताम् ।

उपाख्यानैर्विना तावद्वारतं प्रोच्यते बुधैः ॥ — आदिपर्व 1-78

14. See foot note 3 above.

15. मन्वादि भारतं केवित् आस्तिकादि तथापरे ।

तथोपरिचरादन्ये विप्राः सम्यगधीयिरे ॥ — आदिपर्व 1-66

16. According to one statement, (of Ugras'ravas) it is 8800 verses; according to another (of Vyāsa), it is 24000; and according to a third statement, it is one lakh of verses.

इदं शतसहस्रं तु लोकानां पुण्यकर्मणाम् ।

उपाख्यानैः सह ज्ञेयमाद्यं भारतसुत्तमम् ॥

चतुर्विंशतिसाहस्रीं चक्रे भारतसंहिताम् ।

उपाख्यानैर्विना तावद्वारतं प्रोच्यते बुधैः ॥

अष्टौ श्लोकसहस्राणि अष्टौ श्लोकशतानि च ।

अहं वेद्यि शुको वेत्ति सञ्जयो वेत्ति वा न वा ॥ — आदि० अ० १

17. The material is not homogeneous. Ideas and beliefs of different epochs are amalgamated here. Such additions

and philosophical part and (c) the upākhyānas illustrative of the nature and means of all the four puruṣārthas.

6. Additions were made to Vyāsa's original JAYĀ by Vaisampāyana and Sauti on two different occasions.

These evidences go to show that (i) the original epic written by Vyāsa had the name 'Jayā' and consisted of 8800 s'lokas. (ii) The Jayā together with the additions made by Vaisampāyana got the name Bhārata or Bhārata-samhitā and consisted of 24000 s'lokas and (iii) this Bhārata as developed by the SAUTI, while relating it to the sages in the Naimisāranya, into a work of a lakh of s'lokas came to be called the Mahābhārata. This further leads us to conclude that although Vyāsa wrote the brief original of the epic, the work underwent at least a two-stage development and therefore, in its present form, cannot be taken as the work of any particular author or date. Many centuries must have elapsed before Vyāsa's Jayā took its present bulky form of the Mahābhārata.

DATE—The Mahābhārata tells us that the great Bhārata war took place during the <sup>18</sup>transition between the Dvāpara and Kali yugas, that

may be said to be of two kinds. The first kind is of an epic character and is due to the endeavour to gather together and unite all ancient legends available. The second kind is purely of a didactic nature. Most of these episodes are not closely interwoven with the main story.

18. अन्तरे चेव संप्राप्ते कलिद्रापरयोरभूत् ।

समन्तपञ्चके युद्धं कुरु गण्डवसेनयोः ॥ — आदिपर्व 2-13

Dhṛtarāṣṭra lived for just 18 years and that the Pāṇḍavas reigned for only 36 years after the war. We learn from the Bhāgavata xii, 2-30, that Sri Kṛṣṇa <sup>19</sup>departed from this world on the first day of the Kaliyuga. These traditional accounts only prove that the Mahābhārata war took place in 3138 B.C. and that Kṛṣṇa expired in 3102 B.C.

The Purāṇas<sup>20</sup> record that the *Ursa Major* (Saptarśimandala) was in the Maghā constellation when king Parīkṣit was reigning. This stellar position is calculated by astronomers to have been once in 3177 B.C. and next in 477 B.C. It is expected to occur again in 2223 A.D. It is believed that the *Ursa Major* will be in a particular constellation for one hundred<sup>21</sup> years only. This also supports the view that the Bhārata war took place in 3138 B.C.

The Pāṇḍavas ruled for 36 years after the Bhārata war. Vyāsa wrote this epic after the death of the Pāṇḍavas. He took three years to complete the work. So the original epic was written in about 3100 B.C. It is mentioned in the Mahāprāsthānika parva that the Pāṇḍavas departed from this world after installing Parīkṣit on the throne. This must have taken place in 3102 B.C.

19. The Viṣṇu and other purāṇas also state that Kṛṣṇa lived for 125 years 7 months and 8 days and departed from this world on the 1st day of Kaliyuga.

20. अ) सतर्ष्यो मध्यायुक्ताः काले पारिक्षिते शतम् ।—मत्स्यपु० 271-46

आ) ते तु पारिक्षिते काले मध्यास्वासन् द्विजोत्तम—विष्णु० 4-24-106

इ) भागवत xii 2. वायुपुराण 99.

21. See Bṛhatsamhitā xiii 4. The *Ursa Major* takes 2700 years to complete a full cycle round the zodiac.

Parīksit ruled for 60 years. His son Janamejaya became king in 3042 B.C. and in one or two years thereafter, when he performed the snake-sacrifice, Vaisampāyana gave out the 'Jayā' to him. Thus the Bhārata-samhitā form of the epic came into being in c. 3040. Further on in c. 3000 B.C. it must have taken the form of the Mahābhārata when the Sauti read it out to the sages in the Naimisāraṇya.

But western critics hesitate to accept such an ancient date for the Mahābhārata. Their view is as follows.—

The background of the central theme of the poem is an ancient hitch between two neighbouring tribes, the Kurus and the Pāñcālas who later on were welded into a single people. The Yajurveda speaks of these two tribes as already united. Therefore the historical germ of the Mahābhārata takes us to about 10th Century B.C. Old songs about the heroes of these tribes must have been handed down and those disconnected songs worked up into a short epic by some poet was perhaps the original Bhārata.

In the Mahābhārata, Brahma is assigned a very prominent place, while his is only a subordinate one in the Vedic hymns. Buddhistic literature shows that by Buddha's time Brahma had occupied this position of supremacy in the Hindu religion. So we may assume that the original Bhārata came into being somewhere about the 6th Century B.C. Then it must have contained only about 8000 verses.

In the second stage of its growth the Mahābhārata must have swelled to a length of 24000

verses. It was now that the work got its *Vaiṣṇavaite* colour<sup>22</sup> and *Kṛṣṇa* was proclaimed as an *AVATĀRA* of *Viṣṇu*. From the accounts of Megasthanese at about 300 B.C., we find that the Hindus had regarded *Viṣṇu* as the supreme god. Moreover mention of the *Yavanas* and other foreign tribes and reference to Buddhistic relics and temples in the *Mahābhārata* point to the conclusion that those portions of the work must have been composed after the death of Buddha and the invasion of the Greeks. Hence this second extension of the epic must have taken place by about 300 B.C.<sup>23</sup>

In the third stage, the *Mahābhārata* grew to its present size by the insertion of a number of dissertations in verse on various ethical and philosophical subjects. Thus it took the form of an encyclopædia of popular moral instruction. Inscriptions of land grants of the 5th century mention the *Mahābhārata*; and many of those land grants are clearly for the exposition of *Dharma* through the *Mahābhārata*, as it was then regarded as an

22. Since then the epic has come to be known as the *Kārṣṇaveda*, the *Veda* of *Kṛṣṇa*, and the fifth *Veda*, because of the *Vaiṣṇava* doctrines emphasised clearly by numerous passages therin. The *Bhagavadgītā* is only a part of this great epic.

23. The greek writer Rhetor Dion Chrysostom who lived in the latter half of the 1st cent A.D. has recorded that the *Mahābhārata*, a work of one lakh of verses, was very popular in South India in his time. On this authority, it may be said that the MB had attained its present form even before the beginning of the Christian Era.

authority on Smṛti. Therefore this transformation of the epic must have taken place in about 300 A.D.

Thus the period of growth of the Mahābhārata covers eight or nine centuries.

The above is the view accepted generally. But some individual scholars hold other opinions too.—

1. According to Holtzman the traditional stock of legends was first worked up into a connected narrative by some Buddhist poet probably during the reign of As'oka, the Kaurava hero representing that monarch; and the poem was revised, by about 800 A.D., by the Brahmin votaries of Viṣṇu to suit their own purposes by changing the Buddhistic features of the epic. This view cannot stand as it shifts the completion of the work to a very late date inconsistent with the epigraphical and other evidences.

2. Rev. Dalhman holds that the epic was a didactic work composed by a single poet in pre-Buddhistic times.

3. Some scholars think that the work was originally composed in prose, either continuous or interspersed with verse, while some others opine that the original work was in some Prākṛt which would account for the irregular and colloquial forms found in it.

4. There is also a view that the worship of Kṛṣṇa, an important figure in the Epic, arose under the influence of Christianity. This view is rendered impossible by the statement of Megasthenes that Kṛṣṇa was deified and worshipped centuries before Christ. Moreover it is clear from

the *Mahābhāṣya*<sup>24</sup> (144 B.C.) that there were dramatic representations of the story of Kṛṣṇa even before Christ.

### THE MAHĀBHĀRATA AND LATER LITERATURE

The *Mahābhārata* has wielded considerable influence on later writers. Being the first epic with an encyclopædiac variety of <sup>24</sup>contents and a store-house of legends and philosophical and ethical teachings, the work could easily supply all types of material for writers<sup>25</sup> to work on. Thus came up numerous poems, prose and campū works and dramas. If Bhāsa dramatised almost the entire story of the *Mahābhārata* in several of his plays (viz., *Madhyamavyāyoga*, *Dūtavākyā*, *Dūtaghatotkaca*, *Pañcarātra*, *Kārṇabhāra*, and *Uru-bhaṅga*), Kālidāsa chose the charming episode of Śākuntalā and gave it the form of an immortal love drama of an ever fresh interest. *Venīsamhāra* of Bhattanārāyaṇa should also be noted here as an excellent drama of heroic sentiment dealing with the *gadā-yuddha* between Duryodhana and Bhīma.

The *Naisadha* of Harṣa, the *Sisupālavadha* of Māgha, the *Kirātārjuniya* of Bhāravi and the *Bālabhārata* of Amaracandra are some of the famous *mahākāvyas* based on the different episodes of the *Mahābhārata*.

24. धर्मशास्त्रमिदं पुण्यम् अर्थशास्त्रमिदं परम् ।

मोक्षशास्त्रमिदं प्रोक्तं व्यासेनामित्बुद्धिना ॥ — 25

धर्मे चार्थे च कामे च मोक्षे च भरतर्षभ ।

यदिहास्ति तदन्यत यन्नेहास्ति न तत् क्वचित् ॥ — 26 आदिपर्व 62

25. सर्वेषां कविसुख्यानां उपजीव्यो भविष्यति ।

पर्जन्य इव भूतानाम् अक्षयो भारतसुमः ॥ — आदिपर्व 1-108

The Nala-campū of Trivikramabhatta, and the Bhārata-campū of Anantabhatta are famous campū works based on the Mahābhārata. Bhārata-mañjari of Kṣemendra is a beautiful poetical epitome of the great epic.

The most charming episode of Nala (Nalopākhyāna) of the epic may be singled out as having been the basis for numerous works, the chief Mahākāvyas among them being the Naisadhiyacarita of Śrīharṣa (1150 A.D.), the Sahṛdayānanda of Kṛṣṇānanda (1200 A.D.), the Nalābhuyudaya of Vāmanabhatta Bāna (1400 A.D.), the Nalodaya of Vāsudeva (1450 A.D.). Besides the Campū work Nalacampū of Trivikramabhatta (900 A.D.) mentioned above, three dramas, viz., the Naisadhānanda of Kṣemisvara (900 A.D.), the Nalavilāsa of Rāmacandra (1150 A.D.) and the Nalacarita of Nilakanthadikṣita (1650 A.D.) are also noteworthy in this connection.

The influence of the Mahābhārata on later law-givers and philosophers has been so great that it has attained the status of a Veda and come to be known as the fifth Veda. It is quoted profusely as an authority in all standard commentaries on the Brahmasūtras and the Upaniṣads.

There have been many commentaries on the Mahābhārata, the chief among them being of ARUṄAMISRA (15th Cent.), of SARVAJÑA NĀRĀYĀNA (14th Cent.) and of NĪLAKĀNTHA (16th Cent.)

The epic has been so very popular that its translations have appeared in large numbers, not only in the different Indian vernaculars, but also in many foreign languages.

The *Mahābhārata* is justly regarded as the National Epic of India. It is held in high esteem by one and all throughout the length and breadth of India. Reading of the Epic and discourses based on it are going on even to this day in every part of the country.

### THE HARIVAMS'A

The *Harivams'a* is usually considered a *khila*, i.e., a supplement to the *Mahābhārata*. It is of a considerable length as it contains more than 16,000 verses. Its chief object is to glorify *Viṣṇu*.

The *Harivams'a* has three parts or books. They are the *Harivams'a-parva*, the *Viṣṇu-parva* and the *Bhavisya-parva* respectively. The *Harivams'a-parva* deals with the creation of the world, the solar and lunar dynasties of kings and *Yadu*, the ancestor of *Kṛṣṇa*, and the birth of *Kṛṣṇa*. The second *Viṣṇu-parva* gives a full account of all the adventures of *Kṛṣṇa* picturing him as an *avatāra* of *Viṣṇu*. The *Bhavisya-parva*, although at the commencement dealing with some prophecies about future ages, gives accounts of many unconnected subjects such as creation, the *Vāmana* and *Narasimha* *Avatāras* of *Viṣṇu*, and the mutual adorations of *S'iva* and *Viṣṇu*.

The *Harivams'a* contains plenty of <sup>26</sup>"*upākhyānas*, such as of *Rṣyasṛṅga*, *Cyavana*, *Sibi*, *Rāma*, *Sāvitri*, *Nala*, *Nahuṣa*, *Yayāti*, *Dhruva*, *Vena*, *Visvāmitra*, *Gaṅgāvatarāṇa*,—all narrated in a delightful manner. It is on account of the

26. The main narrative in the *Harivams'a* is only  $\frac{1}{5}$  of the work; the rest, i.e.,  $\frac{4}{5}$ , is occupied by *Upākhyānas*.

plentifulness of the upākhyānas and also because all the details of the Kṛṣṇāvatāra are given here for the first time, the Harivams'a, although a minor epic, enjoys great popularity.

The Mahābhārata mentions that the Harivams'a also is Vyāsa's work<sup>27</sup> and that, as such, the three parvas of it go to complete a hundred along with the 97 parvas of the Mahābhārata.

It is stated that Vaisampāyana related this Harivams'a also for the first time, in continuation of the Mahābhārata, during the snake-sacrifice of Janamejaya.

### THE BHAGAVADGĪTĀ

The Bhagavadgītā is a poem of about 650 verses divided into 18 chapters. It is in the form of a dialogue between Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa and forms a portion of the Bhiṣma-parva in the Mahābhārata. When Arjuna hesitates to kill his own kinsmen in the battle-field, Kṛṣṇa persuades him to fight by expounding to him, in the text of the Bhagavadgītā, the <sup>28</sup>KARMAYOGA, JñĀNAYOGA and BHAKTIYOGA,—each of these three doctrines being dealt with in six chapters.

The Bhagavadgītā is regarded as a philosophical poem. It is one of the most popular treatises of Hindu philosophy. It comprises of several

27. हरिवर्षशस्तः पर्व पुराणं खिलसंज्ञितम् ।

विष्णुपर्वशिशोश्चर्या विष्णोः कंसवधस्तधा ॥

भविष्यं पर्व चाप्युक्तं खिलेष्वेषाद्भुतं महत् ।

एतत्पर्वशतं पूर्णं व्यासेनोक्तं महात्मना ॥ —आदिपर्व 2-83, 84

28. Karma is duty for duty's sake; Jñāna is spiritual knowledge; and Bhakti is incessant devotion.

doctrines, such as self-surrender and duty for duty's sake. The language of the text is so flexible that almost all the great thinkers of India have found in it plenty of support to their own views. Sankara, Ramanuja, and Madhva and a number of other philosophers have commented on the *Gitā* and expounded their own schools of thought on the basis of it.

Every Indian believes, that the author of the *Bhagavadgitā* is Lord Kṛṣṇa. Tradition also holds the same view, as the *Mahābhārata* is an Ākhyāna wherein Vyāsa has recorded things as personally witnessed by him. That is why the work is called from early times the *BHAGAVADGĪTĀ*. But the length of the work and the intricate doctrines dealt within it have made some scholars feel that the entire *Gitā* as it is found now could not have been given out on the battlefield. Their view is that there might have been a very short dialogue between Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa which has been enlarged and introduced into the *Mahābhārata* by its author Vyāsa or some other person, later on.

The great poet Bāṇa (7th cent. A.D.) and the philosopher Sankara (8th cent. A.D.) recognise the *Bhagavadgitā* as the song of the Lord (Kṛṣṇa) and as part and parcel of the Epic. Modern scholars think that the work must have been composed somewhere about the 4th or 3rd cent. B.C., and incorporated into the *Mahābhārata* by about 2nd century A.D.

The *Bhagavadgitā* has been translated into almost all languages of the world. It enjoys a very high reputation as the greatest work in philosophical literature.

## (2) THE PURĀNAS

The term PURĀNA is found in the Brāhmaṇas and there it signifies pre-historic and especially cosmogonical legends and descriptions of ancient traditions. In the Mahābhārata the word occurs in the sense of ancient legends about gods and the geneology of sages. The Upaniṣads class the Purāṇas with Itihāsa and call them the fifth Veda. The Smṛtis say that the Purāṇas are for the exposition (अपूर्वांशः) of the Vedas. All this shows that the PURĀNA literature existed from very early times. Purāṇa is in fact purāṇavam, that which was new formerly, i.e., in ancient times. But as the Purāṇas are partly legendary and partly speculative histories of the Universe, the moderns have a tendency to view them as not quite authoritative. But this much is certain that the Purāṇas have been a kind of popular encyclopædias of useful information, as their compilers have gathered together a mass of extraneous matter on all subjects although for giving them a sectarian or didactic character.

A general survey of the existing Purāṇas will reveal that they are didactic in character and sectarian in purpose and that they contain alongside with cosmogony, mythical descriptions of the earth, the doctrine of the yugas, rules of worship and so on. All of them recognise the brahmanical doctrine of Trimūrti. But they do not appear to be homogeneous compositions. They seem to be enlarged forms of old works. The later additions are obviously to establish on quasi-historical grounds the claims of some particular gods of holy places. Although these additions cannot be older

than about a thousand years or so, the original material of the Purāṇas may definitely go back to several centuries before Christ. The Viṣṇupurāṇa states that Vyāsa wrote the work called Purāṇa-Samhitā<sup>89</sup> and that it was later developed into 18 Purāṇas by Vyāsa's disciples. Other Purāṇas also mention that there was only one Purāṇa in the beginning. While this explains away Vyāsa's common authorship of all the Purāṇas, it also makes it clear that the original Purāṇa, the basis for the later ones, must have been older<sup>90</sup> than the Mahābhārata and the Upaniṣads. Bāṇa of the 7th century A.D., refers to the Vāyu-purāṇa. Kumārila Bhatta of the 8th century and Śaṅkarācārya of the 9th century recognise the Purāṇas as authoritative. Hence the Purāṇas in their present form must have been far older than the 6th or 7th century A.D.

Some of the Purāṇas seem to have taken their present form after the 1st cent. A.D. For, if the Viṣṇu-purāṇa refers to the Maurya dynasty, the Matsya and Vāyu purāṇas speak of the Andhra and Gupta dynasties. This helps us to hold that the Purāṇas were enlarged with all later additions between the 1st cent. and 6th cent. A.D.

According to tradition, there are 18 Mahā-purāṇas and an equal number of Upa-purāṇas. The main Purāṇas are supposed to consist of 400000 couplets.

29. आख्यानैश्चोपाख्यानैः गाथाभिः कल्पशुद्धिभिः ।

पुराणसंहितां चक्रे पुराणर्थविशारदः ॥ — विष्णुपुराण ३-६-१५

30. अष्टादशपुराणानि कृत्वा सत्यवतीसुतः ।

भारताख्यानमखिलं चक्रे तदुपबुंहणम् ॥ — मत्स्यपुराण ५३-७०

We have stated above how all these Purāñas came to be attributed to the common authorship of Vyāsa. Their structure is typical. As in the case of the Mahābhārata, the Purāñas are narrated to the sages in the Naimisāranya by the Sūta-purāṇika, who, in this case, is Ugras'ras, son of Lomaharṣaṇa.

The Amarakosa has the following definition of the Purāṇa—

सर्गश्च प्रतिसर्गश्च वैशो मन्वन्तराणि च ।  
वैशानुचरितं चापि पुराणं पञ्चलक्षणम् ॥

Thus a Purāṇa should deal with five topics, viz., cosmogony (सर्ग and प्रतिसर्ग), chronology (वैश), cosmology (मन्वन्तर) and geneology (वैशानुचरितम्). The existing Purāṇas deal with these topics and much more also. While they uphold the trinity of gods (Brahma, Viṣṇu and S'iva) in general, they emphasise the superiority of one particular god over the other two of the trinity and accordingly indulge in a good deal of sectarian matter.

Like the Mahābhārata, the Purāṇas are composed exclusively in the epic s'loka in the same easy style. But, in poetic value they are far inferior. Thus, although they have not got much of a literary value, they are certainly very valuable as records of early Indian culture. They help us to trace the evolution of Indian thought in the social, religious and political spheres. Some of them give us the Hindu conception of literature, architecture, and other fine arts. They have supplied very many subjects for most of the poets and dramatists, and inspired them to produce excellent works of high literary value.

Writers and commentators on works of philosophy, ethics and law have used the Purāṇas as sources of authority. Historians look to the Purāṇas for pre-historic chronicles. To the religious minded man they are sacred books and a study or a recitation of them is an act of piety. But it must be noted that not all Purāṇas have had the same influence on all the people of the different sects of the Hindu religion. Only such of the Purāṇas as would uphold the views and beliefs of a particular sect and extol the worship of the deity of that sect have exercised profound influence on the people of that sect; other Purāṇas have been of no consideration to them. Whatever this be, the Purāṇas as a whole form a good record of the cultural history of India.

The 18 Purāṇas are generally divided into three groups thus—

A) <sup>31</sup>VAISNAVA or those which exalt Viṣṇu—

1. Viṣṇu
2. Bhāgavata
3. Nāradiya
4. Garuda
5. Pādma and
6. Varāha

B) BRĀHMA or those which relate to Brahma—

1. Brahma
2. Brahmāṇḍa
3. Brahma-vaivarta
4. Mārkandeya
5. Bhaviṣya
- and 6. Vāmana

C) S'AIVA or those which glorify S'iva—

1. Vāyu
2. Liṅga
3. Skanda
4. Agni
5. Matsya and
6. Kūrma

THE VAISNAVA PURĀṇAS—

THE VIṢNU-PURĀṇA is one of the most important purāṇas. It deals with all the five topics

31. The Vaiṣṇava, Brāhma and Saiva purāṇas are sometimes referred to as Sātvikā, Rājasa and Tāmasa purāṇas respectively.

mentioned in the definition of a Purana. It gives the stories of all the ten avatars of Visnu in six books called AMASAS. In subject matter it agrees with the Mahabharata and does not emphasise much on sectarian sacrifices and observances. Therefore it is believed to be the earliest of the Puranas and is referred to as Puranaratna.

The whole work is in the form of a narration by Parasa-ara to his disciple Maitreya. In popularity, the Visnupurana is next only to the Bhagavata. The composition of this Purana is usually assigned to the 1st or 2nd cent. A.D., as it contains an account of the Mauryan dynasty.

THE <sup>32</sup>BHAGAVATA-PURANA is the most popular among the Puranas. It has exercised a far-reaching influence on the religious beliefs of the people. It is definitely later than the Visnupurana and perhaps based on it. It consists of 18000 verses and is divided into 12 books called skandhas. It deals with all the main and minor avatars of Visnu. The tenth book is the most popular and frequently read, as it gives out the story of Krsna quite elaborately.

It was once believed that the Bhagavata was composed by Bopadeva, a grammarian, who lived in the 13th century. But it has been since shown that the work (viz., Harilila) of Bopadeva is only a

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32. The Devi Bhagavata takes the place of the Bhagavata in the list of the 18 Puranas according to the Saivites. But the Visnuita Bhagavata is more popular than the other one and is accepted as an authority and commented on by numerous scholars and translated into all the vernaculars of India.

synopsis of the Bhāgavata and that the Bhāgavata proper was known to Ballālāsenā of Bengal in the 11 cent.,<sup>33</sup> as he quotes from the work.

In literary merit also, Bhāgavata easily occupies the first rank among the Purāṇas. Kapila and the Buddha are regarded here as the avatāras of Viṣṇu. The story of Kṛṣṇa, as found here, makes not even a mention of Rādhā. The Pādmapurāṇa extols the Bhāgavata. The Bhāgavata is rendered into all Indian languages and commentaries on it are written by many persons.

THE NĀRADĪYA-PURĀṇA exemplifies devotion to Viṣṇu with plenty of illustrative legends and is told by Nārada to Sanatkumāra. It deals with many feasts and ceremonies.

THE GARUDA-PURĀṇA: Viṣṇu expounds this Purāṇa to Garuda. It deals with various topics concerning astronomy, medicine, grammar, precious stones etc. It elaborates the ceremonial observances of the Vaiṣṇava faith. But the more important section of this work is its latter half where the story of the soul after it leaves the human body is given in all detail. As it expounds the significance of the funeral ceremonies performed for one who is dead, it is usually read out on the days succeeding the cremation and listened to by the mourning relatives of the dead.

THE PĀDMA-PURĀṇA has 55000 verses and is divided into six KHĀNDAS, viz., 1) Sṛstikhaṇḍa 2) Bhūmikhaṇḍa 3) Svargakhaṇḍa 4) Pātālakhaṇḍa 5) Uttarakhaṇḍa and 6) Kriyāyogaśāra. The names

33. Madhvācārya quotes from Bhāgavata, but not Rāmā-nujācārya or Saṅkarācārya.

of the *khandas* signify the subject matters dealt with in those sections. The *Uttarakhaṇḍa* is of great significance as it gives an account of the sacredness of the different months of the year and the mystic lotus on which Brahma appeared before the creation of the world. Another noteworthy feature of this *Purāṇa* is that it contains the stories of *S'akuntalā* and of *Rāma* just as they are told by *Kālidāsa* in his immortal drama and the *Raghuvams'a*. This has been largely responsible to consider that this *Purāṇa* belongs to a date later than that of *Kālidāsa*. Moreover it has clear references to the *Bhāgavata* cult and to the Jains. This *Purāṇa* deals with *Rādhā* as the consort of *Kṛṣṇa*.

THE *VARĀHA-PURĀṇA* is narrated by the *Varāha* (avatāra of *Viṣṇu*) and hence that name to it. It deals with several holy places and some rituals. The prayer offered to *Viṣṇu* by earth conceived as a goddess is a significant section of this *Purāṇa*.

### THE BRĀMHA PURĀNAS—

THE *BRAHMA-PURĀṇA*, otherwise known as the *Ādipurāṇa* was expounded by Brahma to *Dakṣa*. In addition to the usual purāṇic contents, it gives us an account of the holy places of *Utkal* (Orissa). The *Brahmapurāṇa* has a supplement called *Saurapurāṇa* which identifies the Sun with *S'iva*. It refers to the Sun temple built at *Konarka* near *Pūri* after 1241 A.D.

THE *BRAHMĀNDA-PURĀṇA* contains the description of the primeval golden egg from which the universe evolved later on. The *Ādhyātma Rāmāyana*, which preaches *Advaita* and devotion to

Rāma as the path leading to salvation, forms of a part of this Purāṇa. It refers to <sup>34</sup>Rādhā as Kṛṣṇa's consort and gives an account of the exploits of Parasurāma.

THE BRAHMAVAIVARTA-PURĀṇA has four khandas, viz., 1) Brahma-khaṇḍa 2) Prakṛti-khaṇḍa 3) Ganes'a-khaṇḍa and 4) Kṛṣṇajanma-khaṇḍa. This Purāṇa describes the creation of the universe as a vivarta, i.e., transformation of Brahman. It is in this Purāṇa that the <sup>34</sup>Rādhā episodes are emphasised.

THE MĀRKANDEYA-PURĀṇA is one of the oldest Purāṇas. It is not sectarian. It gives many legends about Brahma, Indra, Sūrya and Agni and an elaborate description of creation and deluge. It expressly recognises the priority of the Mahā-bhārata. It contains the Devīmāhātmya which glorifies Durgā.

THE BHAVIŚYA-PURĀṇA contains prophesies relating to the future ages. It advocates the worship of Sūrya, Agni and Nāgas and describes many propitiatory rituals. Bhaviṣyottara-purāṇa dealing with some rites and places of pilgrimage is a supplement to this.

THE VĀMANA-PURĀṇA is very much like the Varāha-purāṇa described above. It begins with an account of the Vāmanāvatāra of Viṣṇu and deals with the other avatāras also. It glorifies Śiva and describes the marriage of Śiva with Pārvatī.

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34. Rādhā is unknown to the Harivānsa, the Viṣṇu-purāṇa and the Bhāgavata.

## THE S'AIVA PURĀNAS—

THE VĀYU-PURĀNA is expounded by Vāyu. As stated above, this Purāna is mentioned by Bāṇa of the 7th cent. A.D. The Purāna itself mentions the Gupta monarchs of the 4th cent. A.D., although as a prophesy about the future ages. Therefore this Purāna is assigned to the 5th or 6th cent. A.D. The Purāna extols the worship of S'iva and the S'aivite rituals. Many lists of the 18 Purānas have this Purāna in place of S'iva-purāna.

THE LIṄGA-PURĀNA expounded by the Liṅga form of S'iva describes in detail the 28 different incarnations of S'iva. It is ritualistic in character.

THE SKANDA-PURĀNA gives the story of Skanda or Kumārasvāmi and the destruction of Tārakāsura. This Purāna is very much similar to the relevant parts of Kālidāsa's Kumārasambhava. It contains the Sūta-samhitā and dwells long on the S'aivite philosophy and the holy places dedicated to S'iva.

THE AGNI-PURĀNA is narrated by Agni to Vasistha. It deals with the cult of Liṅga and Durgā. Although s'aivite by nature, the Purāna describes the avatāras of Rāma and Kṛṣṇa. Being of a miscellaneous character, this Purāna gives treatises on poetics, prosody, dramaturgy, astronomy, architecture, etc.

THE MATSYA-PURĀNA contains the story of Manu and the fish (Matsya). It deals with architecture, and iconography. It has references to Jainism, Buddhism, Nātyasāstra, Āndhra dynasty and some secondary Purānas like the Nārasimha.

It mentions the holy places like S'riraṅgam, Rāmesvaram, Tāmraparṇi, etc. of South India.

THE KŪRMĀ-PŪRĀNA gives an account of the avatāras of Viṣṇu of which Kūrma (Tortoise) is one. The world is represented in this Purāna as "consisting of seven concentric islands separated by different oceans. The central island with mount Meru in the middle, is Jambūdvīpa of which 'Bhāratavarsa', the kingdom of the Bhāratas or India, is the main division. This Purāna originally had four samhitas, but now, only one, viz., Brāhmīsamhitā is available. It contains the īśvara-gīta and the Vyāsagītā.

### OTHER PURĀNAS—

Apart from the above 18 primary Purānas, there is an equal number of secondary or Upa-purānas. These do not differ much in character from the principal sectarian purānas. In them the epic matter is always subordinate to the ritual element. These purānas also are ascribed to Vyāsa.

The Viṣnudharmottara deals with Kāśmīr Vaiṣṇavism. The Nīlamatapurāna is the earliest work dealing with the history of Kāśmīr and contains the doctrines taught by Nīla, king of the Nāgas in Kāśmīr. The Buddhistic genealogies and the Jain pattiāvalis are the off-shoots of the Purāna literature.

Besides the Purānas and Upa-purānas, there are plenty of works called Sthala-purānas recounting the history and greatness of particular holy places or shrines. Similar in character are the Māhātmyas which profess to be sections of the several Purānas.

B. THE RĀMĀYANA<sup>35</sup>

The Rāmāyana is generally regarded as the first Kāvya written in the Kāvya style. Therefore it is called the Ādikāvya. It is an Itihāsa and an Ākhyāna also.<sup>36</sup> An Itihāsa is an account of ancient occurrences and therefore called Purāvṛtta. An Ākhyāna is an account of occurrences that have been actually witnessed<sup>37</sup> by the writer. Thus like the Rāmāyana, the Mahābhārata also is an Itihāsa and an Ākhyāna; but it is not a Kāvya.

Vālmīki, the author of the Rāmāyana (the Ādikāvya) is rightly reputed as the Ādikavi, the first poet. He was the tenth son of Varuṇa.<sup>38</sup> Having fallen into the company of robbers, he was teasing even pious persons. Once the seven sages made him realise his folly and initiated him into religious life. He was advised to chant the name of 'Rāma' to free himself from the sins so far committed by him. For several thousand years he remained in penance chanting 'Rāma, Rāma'.<sup>39</sup> An ant-hill had grown around him during that time, and he had to come out of it at the end of the

35. Although Rāmāyana is earlier than the Mahābhārata chronologically, we are dealing with the Rāmāyana here, only because it bears intimate relation with the subsequent development of the *Kāvyas* in Sanskrit Literature.

36. एवमेतत्पुरावृत्तमाख्यानं भद्रमस्तु वः । — रामायण 6-121-122.

37. See foot-note 1 above in page 19.

38. Hence Vālmīki is known also by the name Prācetas i.e., son of Pracetas (Varuṇa).

39. कृजन्तं रामरामेति मधुरं मधुराक्षरम् ।

आख्य कविताशाखां वन्दे वाख्मीकिकोकिलम् ॥

penance. He, therefore, came to be called Vālmīki,—*one who came out of an ant-hill*. Since then he lived at Citrakūta as a sage.<sup>40</sup>

Vālmīki and Rāma, the hero of the poem Rāmāyaṇa, were contemporaries. Rāma lived in Ayodhyā,—his capital on the banks of the Sarayū river,—which was not far from the Citrakūta. When Rāma was exiled, he first visited Vālmīki in his hermitage in the forest and settled down for some time in an adjoining region. Later on, Sītā was abandoned only near the hermitage of Vālmīki, who, Rāma knew very well, would be moved at the plight of the erstwhile queen of Ayodhyā and accord her due shelter. Just as was expected by Rāma, Sīta was welcomed by Vālmīki most affectionately with very significant words thus—

स्तुषा दशरथस्य त्वं रामस्य महिषी प्रिया ।  
जनकस्य सुता राज्ञः स्वागतं ते पतिव्रते ॥ ८ ॥ .....

यथा स्वगृहमभ्येत्य विषादं चैव मा कृथाः ॥ १२ ॥

When Sītā gave birth to her twin sons, it was Vālmīki who performed their Jātakarma etc.,

40. All this was long before Rāma, Das'aratha's son, was born. The Rāma mantra chanted by Vālmīki to get rid of his sins is not the mere name of the son of Das'aratha. It is a mantra relating to that pleasing form of Visṇu under the name of Rāma. It is note-worthy here that the following traditional dhyānas'loka of this *Rāma mantra* refers to a situation which neither occurs, nor is referred to in the Rāmāyaṇa.—वैदेहीसहितं सुरक्षुमतले हैमे महामण्टपे

मध्येपुष्पकमासने मणिमये वीरासने सुस्थितम् ।  
अग्रे वाचयति प्रभद्वनसुते तत्वं मुनिभ्यः परं  
ब्याख्यान्तं भरतादिभिः परिच्छ्रुतं रामं भजे श्यामलम् ॥

and later educated them personally. Such was the intimate relationship between Rāma and Vālmīki.

Vālmīki was deeply <sup>1</sup> sorry that Sītā was abandoned by Rāma simply because some persons raised a scandal. He was very much worried over that act of Rāma whom he considered ideal in every respect. That is why, when he met Nārada, he asked him कोन्वस्मिन् संप्रतं लोके गुणवान् कश्च वीर्यवान् । धर्मज्ञश्च कृतज्ञश्च सत्यवाक्ये दृढव्रतः ॥ etc., and not at all because he was unaware of Rāma's greatness. Nārada's <sup>2</sup> reply that Rāma was such a person satisfied him. At once he made up his mind to write<sup>3</sup> his poem Rāmāyaṇa to show not only Rāma's greatness but also to record Sītā's highly commendable conduct from the very beginning to the end, i.e., even after Rāma abandoned her.

Deeply immersed in thoughts about the poem he proposed to write, Vālmīki went to the Tamasā river for ablution. There he saw a male krauñca bird being struck down to death by a hunter leaving its mate to lament bitterly. Vālmīki was moved at this sight and pronounced on the hunter a curse which took the form of a s'loka thus—

मा निषादं प्रतिष्ठां त्वमगमः शाश्वतीः समाः ।

यत्कौश्चमिश्रुनादेकमवधीः काममोहितम् ॥ — रामायण 1-2-15

41. According to Kālidāsa Vālmīki was angry on Rāma. Cf.—उत्त्वातलोकत्रयकण्टकेऽपि सत्यप्रतिज्ञेऽप्यविकल्पनेऽपि ।

त्वां प्रत्यक्षमात्कलुषप्रवृत्तावस्थ्येव मन्युर्भरताग्रजे मे ॥ — रघु० १४-७३

42. इश्वाकुवंशप्रभवो रामो नाम जनैः श्रुतः etc.—रामायण 1-1-8.

43. काव्यं रामायणं कृत्स्नं सीतायाश्चरितं महत् ।

पौलस्त्यवधमित्येव चकार चरितव्रतः ॥ — रामायण 1-4-7.

He then retrnrned home and was relenting for having uttered a curse while thinking of writing a poem. Just at that time Brahma appeared there and encouraged him to write the proposed poem by bestowing on him the power to have direct communion with Rāma's past as well as future life. The present, Vālmīki knew quite well, as Sītā and her sons were living in his own hermitage. Thereupon Vālmīki wrote the Rāmāyaṇa of 24000 s'lokas in 4500 chapters divided into seven kāṇdas, viz., Bāla, Ayodhyā, Aranya, Kiśkindhā, Sundara, Yuddha and Uttara kāṇdas.

चतुर्विंशत्सहस्राणि श्लोकानामुक्तवानृषिः ।

तथा सर्वशतान् पञ्च षट्काण्डानि तथोत्तरम् ॥ रामायण 1-4-2.

He taught the poem to the twins Lava and Kusa who sang it before Rāma when he performed the As'vamedha.

The Rāmāyaṇa begins with what is usually called the Saṅkṣepa-rāmāyaṇa which occupies the whole of the first sarga. It contains the account of Rāma's life as narrated by Nārada to Vālmīki. The third sarga of the Bālakāṇda gives the contents of what Vālmīki wrote in the epic.

Although tradition holds that Vālmīki is the author of the entire Rāmāyaṇa in its present form, the western critics hold that a portion of the Bālakāṇda and the entire Uttarakāṇda are later additions and adduce the following arguments in support of their view—

44. The prevalent editions of the Rāmāyaṇa contain a little more than 24000 s'lokas divided into 645 sargas. This is obviously due to the splitting up of the originally long sargas into short ones by later scribes.

1. The 1st and 3rd sargas of the Bālakānda have two different lists of the contents of the work. One of these lists omits all mention of the stories of the Bālakānda and the Uttara-kānda, while the other includes them. Obviously, therefore, the two lists mark the two stages of the development of the Rāmāyāna.

2. Some episodes such as the Gaṅgāvatarana, not directly concerned with the main narrative, are found only in the Bāla and Uttara kāndas, which is indicative of a later extension of the work on the model of the Mahābhārata which is full of such Upākhyānas.

3. Statements referring to Rāma as an avatāra of Viṣṇu are found only in the 1st and 7th (and the closing part of the 6th) kāndas, whereas he is only a perfect man and a model hero in the other kāndas.

4. Only the first 6 kāndas are recited even to this day. Later adaptations and versions of the Epic retold in other languages stop at the coronation of Rāma, the logical conclusion of the story.

5. The beginning of the Bālakānda says how Vālmiki composed the poem, taught the same to the sons of Rāma, who went to their father's court and gave a recital of the entire poem. As the Uttarakānda contains all details of the abandoning of Sītā, the birth of Lava and Kusa and such other events up to even the death of Rāma himself, we cannot suppose that this kānda was taught to the princes and that it was recited. A similar argument holds with reference to the first few sargas of the Bālakānda. Moreover there is in the 5th

verse<sup>45</sup> of the 5th sarga of the Bālakānda a natural beginning of the story of Rāma. Perhaps Vālmīki began his work with this as the opening verse of his epic.

6. Songs and poems in praise of a hero or a king were usually recited by bards and minstrels called Kus'ī-LAVAS in Sanskrit. The praise of Rāma written by a contemporary poet Vālmīki, must have been entrusted to such bards for being recited in the court of Rāma. It is significant that the names of Rāma's twin sons Kus'a and Lava bear etymological relationship with the term Kus'īlavas.

### THE AGE OF THE RĀMĀYANA

Rāma lived towards the close of the Tretāyuga according to Indian tradition. The Tretāyuga came to an end 867100 years before Christ. It is recorded in the Rāmāyaṇa that Rāma ruled as king for 11000 years<sup>46</sup> and that he was about 40 years old when he was coronated after his return from exile. Vālmīki, Rāma's contemporary, wrote the Rāmāyaṇa after Sītā was abandoned by Rāma and the twins Lava and Kus'a were born to her. From these, it is clear that the epic was composed about 878000 B.C. But western scholars and some Indians in their following reject this traditional view as fantastic and unreliable.

Prof. Jacobi's view is as follows:—The Mahā-bhārata has certain archaic features not found in

45. कोमलो नाम मुदितः स्फीतो जनपदो महान् ।

निविष्टः सरयूतीरे प्रभूतधनधान्यवान् ॥

46. दशवर्षसहस्राणि दशवर्षशतानि च ।

रामो राज्यनुपासित्वा ब्रह्मलोकं प्रवाल्पति ॥ — रामायण 1-1-97.

the Rāmāyāna. Therefore the earliest elements of the original Mahābhārata must be older than the original Rāmāyāna. While the Mahābhārata introduces speakers with prose formulæ such as (कर्ण) उवाच, Rāmāyāna invariably makes them part of the verse. No doubt the Rāmāyāna comes nearer the later classical poetry than the Mahābhārata; but yet the original portions of the Rāmāyāna (i.e., the five kāṇdas 2 to 6) must have been finished before the epic nucleus of the Mahābhārata had reached the first stage of its growth, i.e., 500 B.C. The reasons adduced in support of this conclusion may be summarised thus—

1) Tradition holds that Rāmāyāna is older than the Mahābhārata.

2) While the Rāmāyāna makes no mention of the leading characters of the Mahābhārata, the latter refers to the story of Rāma more than once.

3) Rāmā's story appears among the Buddhist Jātakas in a form which suggests that Vālmiki's work was known to their author.

4) The city of Pātaliputra which was founded about 380 B.C., is not mentioned in the Rāmāyāna, although Rāma is described as crossing the very spot where the city stood and although the poet mentions other cities like Kausāmbī.

5) During Asoka's reign, Prākṛt was the language of the people in that part of India where the Rāmāyāna was composed. So, it is very likely that the Rāmāyāna, whose first appeal was to the common people, was composed long before Prākṛt assumed this importance.

Prof. Keith holds a different view and has attempted to bring down the date of the Rāmā-

yāna to 300 B.C. The views of other orientalists again are different and even fantastic as could be seen by a perusal of the following extract from Balfour's Cyclopædia of India, Volume III —

"Rama of the solar line of Hindu chronology is, however, placed by Brahmins, 867, 102 B.C., between the silver and brazen ages. But he has been variously supposed to have lived, 2022 B.C. Jones, 950 Hamilton, and 1100 Todd, and according to Bentley he was one year old in 960, born on 6th April 961; Rama preceded Krishna but as their historians Valmiki and Vyasa, who wrote events they witnessed, were contemporaries, it could not have been many years."

### TEXTUAL VARIATIONS

A remarkable feature of this poem is the great variation of its textual condition. In different parts of the country there are at least three different recensions. The first generally known as the Bombay recension, is prevalent in the north and south. The second is the Bengal recension and the third is recognised chiefly in Kāśmīr and north west of India. About one third of the matter of each recension is not found in the other two and in the common portions also there are many variations. To account for this textual variety it has been suggested that the poem was most likely composed in a popular dialect (Prākṛt) and was thence turned into Sanskrit by others who at that time improved it. Since the Sanskritization is supposed to have been made by different hands in different provinces, it is thought that the variations mentioned above arose. This however is hardly likely. The differences are more probably due to

the fact that the poem was for a long time handed down orally in Sanskrit by story narrators. In so handing it down, variations naturally arose in different ways in different provinces.

### THEORIES ABOUT THE CONTENTS OF THE EPIC

Various allegorical interpretations of the story of Rāma have been suggested both by ancient Hindu scholars and modern Sanskritists; but these are for the most part beside the mark. Some modern scholars have assumed greek influence on the story which also lacks foundation. From a comparison of the narrative portions of the poem with a popular version of it contained in one of the Pāli stories, namely, Dasaratha-jātaka which lacks the second part of the story relating to the Laṅkā expedition, Weber tried to show that the expedition part was not in the original epic and was later introduced through the influence of the Troy legend of Greece. Recent investigation has shown this theory to be untenable, for, the Jātaka story gives an indication that the 2nd part of the story was really known to the author of the Jātaka. There are, besides this, many differences between the carrying away of Sītā and the story of Helen and the Trojan war.

As regards the general idea underlying the story, the expedition to Laṅkā has called forth different theories though there is no agreement arrived at in the matter. Lassen saw in the expedition a poetical representation of the spread of Aryan rule and civilization over south India. Others have taken the Rāksasas of Laṅkā to be the Buddhists of Ceylon. Still others infer that

the Rāmāyaṇa should have originated in pre-buddhistic times; for, Buddha's name is mentioned only once in it and that in a passage which is obviously interpolated. More recently again, Prof. Jacobi has tried to show that the poem has neither an allegorical nor religious significance, but has as its back-ground a religion mythical in meaning. Rāma represents Indra and Sītā furrow. The Rgveda shows an instance where Sītā is invoked as the tutelary deity of the tilled earth wedded to Indra.

### GENERAL

While the Rāmāyaṇa belongs to the east of India and sings the praise of the solar race, the Mahābhārata is of Madhyades'a and extols the lunar line of kings. The Rāmāyaṇa is in the main the work of a single author Vālmīki; it tells a connected story. But the Mahābhārata has no such unity. The conflict in the Mahābhārata is between heroic MEN, while in the Rāmāyaṇa one of the fighting parties consists of demons and monsters.

In Indian epic poetry there is an important distinction between the popular stories (known as *Itihāsa* and *Purāṇa*), where the story is important, and poems known as *Kāvyas* in which form is regarded at least as important as, if not more than, the story. It is the Rāmāyaṇa that marks the beginnings of this latter type of the epics.

The poetic diction of the Rāmāyaṇa is superior to that of the Mahābhārata. Vālmīki is rich in similes and metaphors, and, though occasionally, employs other figures of speech also. His descriptions of nature approximate those of later poets and

he also works in their manner on even emotion. The language is more elegant and musical than that of the Mahābhārata; but almost the same type of irregularities of grammar occur which indicate the popular character of the language of the work. It contains several episodes, though fewer than the Mahābhārata. One of the most interesting of these occurs quite early in the work and recounts the birth of Indian classical poetry. Divested of its romantic element this story implies that a new poetic era dawned after the prosaic age of the Brāhmaṇas and that Vālmīki was the morning star of Indian classical songs. This is recognised by later poets when they refer to him as the Ādikavi and to his poem as the Ādikāvya. It has accordingly deeply influenced the literary productions during the past 2500 years and has always served as a model to be imitated by poets inclusive of Kālidāsa. It has also furnished the subjects during this long period for many Sanskrit plays and poems. The impression it has made on the minds of the people in general is still greater. Probably no work of the world's literature has ever produced so profound an influence on the life and thought of a people.

In the words of M. Williams ".....there are in the whole range of the world's literature few more charming poems than the Rāmāyāna. The classical purity, clearness, and simplicity of its style, the exquisite touches of true poetic feeling with which it abounds, its graphic descriptions of heroic incidents and nature's grandest scenes, the deep acquaintance it displays with the conflicting workings and most refined emotions of the human heart,

—all entitle it to rank among the most beautiful compositions that have appeared at any period or in any country. It is like a spacious and delightful garden; here and there allowed to run wild, but teeming with fruits and flowers, watered by perennial streams and even its most tangled thickets intersected with delightful pathways.”<sup>47</sup>

The prediction found in the Rāmāyana itself, as of Brahma, that “as long as mountains and rivers stand on the surface of the earth, the RĀMĀ-YĀNA-KATHĀ will remain current in all the worlds” is sure to hold good for all times to come.

### OTHER RĀMĀYANAS

There are other versions of the story of Rāma, bearing the same name of Rāmāyana. Of these, the VĀSIṢTHA RĀMĀYĀNA also called YOGA or JÑĀNA-VĀSIṢTHA, is said to have been composed by Vālmīki himself as an appendage to the Rāmāyana. It contains six chapters, viz., Vairāgya, Mumukṣutva, Utpatti, Sthiti, Upāsana and Nirvāna. The work treats of Yoga and Advaita through many illustrative stories. VASISTHOTTARA RĀMĀYĀNA, also called SīTĀ-VIJAYAM, presents an account of the vanquishment of the hundred-headed Rāvana by Sītā. The ADBHUTA RĀMĀYĀNA or ADBHUTO-TTARA-RĀMĀYĀNA is attributed to Vālmīki himself. It has 27 cantos and describes the early story and real nature of Sītā. According to this version, Sītā kills Rāvana of hundred heads whom Rāma was

47. Indian wisdom page 363.

48. यावत्सास्यन्ति गिरयः सरितश्च महीतले ।

तावद्रामायणकथा लोकेषु प्रचरिष्यति ॥—रामायणे बालकाण्डे ५ सर्गः

unable to vanquish. **ADHYĀTMA RĀMĀYĀNA** is an extract from the **Brahmānda-purāṇa**. It consists of seven books and is in the form of a dialogue between **Umā** and **S'iva**. The fifth chapter of the seventh book forms the 'Rāmagītā.' The work identifies **Rāma** with **Viṣṇu** and asserts that he is the Supreme Spirit. **ĀNANDA RĀMĀYĀNA** and the **MŪLA-RĀMĀYĀNA** describe the greatness of **Hanūmān**.

### COMMENTARIES ON THE RĀMĀYĀNA

Govindarāja's **BHŪṢĀNA-VYĀKHYĀ**, more commonly known as **GOVINDARĀJĪYA**, is the most popular commentary on the **Rāmāyāna**. "The work is learned, discussive and authoritative and comprehends all that a reader may desire for a proper appreciation of the poem." **VĀLMĪKI-HRDAYAM** is another learned commentary on the epic. It is by Ahobila of Conjeevaram, a contemporary of Govindarāja, both of them having been pupils of Parāṅkus'a, the <sup>49</sup> 6th Jeer of the Ahobila mutt. **DHARMĀKŪTAM** by Tryambaka Makhin (17th cent.), is a splendid critique demonstrating the story of **Rāma** as illustrating the codes of Dharma. Besides these, there are a number of commentaries such as **Rāmāyanānvayī** by Rangācārya, **Rāmāyāna-tattvadīpikā** by Mahesatīrtha, **Rāmāyāna-dīpikā** by Vaidyanātha Dīksita, **Caturarthī** by an anonymous writer, **Rāmāyāna-sārasaṅgraha** by Varadarāja, **Rāmāyanārthaprakāśikā** by Venkata. But these are not popular.

49. He was a contemporary of Emperor Rāmarāya of Vijayanagar of the 16th century.

## CHAPTER III

## MAHĀKĀVYAS — COURT EPICS

Much earlier than the beginning of the Christian Era, a class of poems began to make their appearance differing in character from the great epics and intended to appeal not to all people but only to the highly cultivated. The language of these poems is largely dominated by the Pāṇinian school and their style is regulated by more or less elaborate laws laid down by writers on poetics. These Kāvyas are deficient in incident; their subject matter is almost entirely derived from the old epics, but they have a merit of their own. They display considerable descriptive power and genuine poetic feeling, though sometimes this feeling unfortunately is expressed in a language that deprives it of half its value. The simple heroic couplet (Anuṣṭup) of the great epics is here mostly discarded and replaced by various elaborate metres. The diction though simple enough in the earlier Kāvyas gradually becomes more and more learned and complicated. The later the Kāvya the more the author seeks to win admiration by the cleverness of his conceits and the ingenuity with which he uses the language. In still later times, the poems become quite degenerate, for, the poets then are imitators of imitations.

The general name of these works, namely, Kāvya, as we know, is already applied to the Rāmā�ana. This term 'Kāvya' literally connotes all that is THE WORK OF A POET. Thus, Kāvya can be s'ravya or dṛṣ'ya. The dṛṣ'ya 'seeable' kāvyas

are the 'plays', while the s'ravya 'hearable' kāvyas are compositions in Padya (verse), Gadya (prose), and Campū (prose interspersed with poetry). The Padyakāvyas generally follow the manner of the Rāmāyaṇa. They are called 'Artificial Epics' or 'Court Epics' by Western scholars. Indian rhetoricians call them 'Mahā-kāvyas or Khaṇḍa-kāvyas in accordance with their length.

### THE PREDECESSORS OF KĀLIDĀSA

[ (1) PĀṇINI (4th cent. B.C.) *Works*—Pātālavijayam (Kāvya); Aṣṭādhyāyī (grammar). (2) VARARUCI (4th cent. B.C.) *Works*—Cārumati (Ākhyāyikā); A Vārtikā on the Aṣṭādhyāyī (grammar). (3) ASVAGHOṢA (2nd cent. A.D.) *Works*—Buddhacarita (kāvya), etc. (4) INSCRIPTIONS—Girnār and Nāsik (2nd cent. A.D.) ANON—Balibandha and Kāmsavadha.]

Kālidāsa is one of the early epic poets of India but he was preceded by many others. Thus the history of Kāvya literature is much older than Kālidāsa. Yāska speaks of upamā and its varieties and also quotes Gārgya's definition of upamā.

1. A Mahākāvya must consist of not less than eight and not more than thirty cantos. The stanzas in each canto may range between thirty and two hundred. The poem may deal with the life of a single hero or with the account of a whole race of kings. The verses in any canto must be of a uniform metre which may be altered at the end of the canto. The close of every canto must suggest the subject matter of the succeeding one. SĀNGĀRA, VIRA or SĀNTA should be the predominant sentiment in the poem whose object must be the attainment of the four PURUṢĀRTHAS, viz., DHARMA, ARTHA, KĀMA and MOKṢA. The

Pāṇini (4th cent. B.C.), the grammarian who comes after Yāska, has been the author of a kāvya, Pātālavijayam or Jāmbavati-haranam<sup>2</sup>, from which citations are found in the anthologies. Vararuci also called Kātyāyana who has written the Vārtikas (a gloss) on Pāṇini's Sūtras, is known to have been the author of an <sup>3</sup>Ākhyāyikā in prose called Cārumati and also of many stray verses preserved in the anthologies. Patañjali is after Kātyāyana. The Mahābhāṣya of Patañjali has numerous references to poems, romances and plays such as Kamsavadha and Balibandha. Keilhorn who has collected the poetic citations from the Mahābhāṣya, says that the Kāvya was in a prosperous state in Patañjali's times. Asvaghosa, whom Buddhistic tradition places in the 2nd cent. A.D., is held by many as Kālidāsa's predecessor. His chief work is Buddhacarita, which, as its name implies, narrates the story of Gautama and his renunciation. It is termed a Mahākāvya and was translated into Chinese by about 400 A.D. That a 'Buddhist monk conceived the plan of writing the legend of poem ought to be embellished with abundant figures of speech. It ought to contain descriptions of cities, seas, mountains, seasons, the rise of the sun and the moon, gardens, water-sport, drinking, love-sport, festivities, separation of lovers, marriages, birth of a son, counsels, the mission of ambassadors and the victories of war-lords. Such a KĀVYA, it is stated, will live to eternity.

2. This is variously called Jāmbavatijayam and Jāmbavativijayam. According to some, this work and the Pātālavijayam are two distinct kāvyas. Both are not available.

3. It is also believed that Vararuci wrote another kāvya known as VĀRARUCAM KĀVYAM after his own name.

Buddha according to the rules of the classical Sanskrit Epic shows how popular the Brahmanic poetry must have become by the 2nd cent. A.D.<sup>4</sup> Kālidāsa himself refers to dramatists like Bhāsa, Saumilla and Kaviputra; and dramas are only later forms of compositions developed over the kāvya form. Therefore it is obvious that the Kāvyas existed long long before Kālidāsa. The Girnar inscription, dated about 150-2 A.D., under the Mahākṣatrapa Rudradāman, which is in perfect kāvya style is another evidence of the above view. But the kāvya works of this earlier period except those of Asvaghosa, obviously eclipsed by the glory of Kālidāsa, have been lost almost irretrievably. If Asvaghosa's works have come down to us, it is because of the Buddhistic theme, there having been no other great poet depicting Buddha's life in a kāvya.

This early bloom of the Kāvya is further confirmed by the enormous influence of Vātsyāyana's Kāma-sūtras on the erotic and lyrical section of Sanskrit Literature. This 'Kāmasūtra, which no doubt belongs to a technical branch of literature, must be assigned to a very early date.

Thus the origin of court-epics takes us to a period much earlier than the Christian Era. In fact from the high regard later poets have for Vālmīki, it may be inferred that the Court epics (Kāvyas) came into being not long after 500 B.C., by which time the original portion of the Rāmāyaṇa is supposed to have been completed.

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4. We refer here only to the original text of this work which must have been very different from its present form.

## ASVAGHOṢA (2nd cent. A D.)

[*Mahākāvya*—1. BUDDHACARITA 2. SAUNDARANANDA  
Play—SĀRIPUTRAPRAKARAṄA, *Minor works*—MANY.]

Asvaghosa who is held to be a contemporary of Kāniṣka is assigned with him to the end of the first or the middle of the 2nd cent. A.D. That his Buddhacarita was translated<sup>5</sup> into Chinese between 414 and 421 A.D., does not affect this view, as at least some two hundred years must have elapsed by the time the work grew to such popularity as to merit a foreign translation. From the colophon of his Saundarananda, it is learnt that he was the son of Suvarṇākṣi and a resident of Sāketa. He had many titles such as Ācārya, Bhadanta, Mahāvādin, Bhikṣu etc. Besides being a great poet, it is said that he was such an impressive teacher that, while listening to his religious discourses, even horses would remain completely absorbed leaving aside their fodder. His name ASVA-GHOṢA is believed to be on this very account.

His works—The Buddhacarita, the Saundarananda and the Sāriputraprakarāṇa are generally accepted as Asvaghosa's. Vajrasūci, Gandīstotragāthā, Sūtrālāṅkāra are worthy of mention among a number of other works attributed to him. In Vallabhadeva's Subhāśitāvalī, there are five stray verses going in the name of Asvaghosa.

THE BUDDHACARITA seems to have contained 28 cantos but only 13 have come to us with a

5. Sanghavarma is the name of this translator. The Sūtrālāṅkāra was translated into Chinese by Kumāra-jīva in 401 A.D.

supplement of four more by a recent author. The discrepant narratives of the older sources of information regarding Buddha are reduced to some harmonious form in this work. We are here entirely in the world of Kāvya as we know it from Kālidāsa for instance, except in regard to their religious aspect. It is quite possible that Kālidāsa was influenced by As'vaghosa's work.<sup>6</sup> As'vaghosa himself on the other hand, it is clear, was influenced by the Rāmāyaṇa in form and in substance. The Buddhacarita is one of the most important Kāvyas of early times that we possess.

THE SAUNDARANANDA is in twenty cantos and all of them are preserved to us. It deals with the conversion of Nanda, a prince and step-brother of Buddha, into a Buddhistic monk and is in point of style and sentiment as fine a work as the Buddhacarita.

THE GANDĪSTOTRAGĀTHĀ is a lyric displaying the author's metrical skill. It 'describes the religious message conveyed by the sounds arising from the beating of a long piece of wood with a short club.'<sup>7</sup>

THE SŪTRĀLĀNKĀRA ascribed to the same author, is preserved only in the form of a translation and the original has been lost. It is in the Campū form and mixes prose with verse. Its aim is to set out the substance of the Buddhistic Jātakas.

6. This is on the presumption that Kālidāsa is later than As'vaghosa. It must be borne in mind that tradition assigns Kālidāsa to 1st cent. B.C.

7. The description of As'vaghosa's play Sāriputraprakaraṇa is given later, in the chapter dealing with drama.

Asvaghosa is thus to be regarded as a first rate Sanskrit poet. He uses a variety of metres with great skill. He is also noted for the appropriateness of the figures of speech he uses.

### INSCRIPTIONS

[ (1) GIRNAR and (2) NASIK — 2nd century A. D.; (3) HARISENA — 4th century A.D.; (4) VATSABHATTI — 5th century A.D.]

We have already mentioned that a perfect kāvya style is found in some inscriptions of a date as early as the 2nd cent. A.D. We refer here to two<sup>8</sup> inscriptions belonging to that century. One is from Girnar and the other from Nasik.

THE GIRNAR INSCRIPTION, which is a Prastasti of Mahāksatrapa Rudradāman, records the restoration of the Sudarsana lake, an event of 150 A.D. The inscription is in prose and evidences the development of the simple epic style to that of the Kāvya. The author displays his skill at description and ascribes to the king great skill in Sanskrit poetry. Many of the characteristic features of the Kāvya style are found in this inscription. There are several enormous compounds and alankāras of both sound and sense. A perusal of the inscription will make it clear that the author was acquainted with the rules of poetics and was obeying them.

THE NASIK INSCRIPTION is in Prākṛt prose, but shows clear traces of the author's knowledge

8. The Girnar and the Nasik inscriptions are the only two selected by Buhler also among earlier inscriptions.

of Sanskrit. Perhaps it is just a deliberate rendering to official Prākṛt of an original composed in Sanskrit. It is an eulogy of Siri Pulumāyi identified with Siro-polemaios of Baithana, Pratiṣṭhāna on the Godāvari. The date of this inscription is about the same as of the Girnar one. The Inscription begins with an enormously long sentence of eight and a half lines and is full of compounds. As in the other inscription here also we find all the mannerisms of the later kāvya. This clearly confirms the view that, at a date much earlier than the 2nd cent. A D., there existed not only the Sanskrit kāvya but also a science of Poetics.

Two more inscriptions, viz., of Harisena and Vatsabbatti, of a date later than the above, displaying many of the characteristic features of the kāvya style deserve mention here. The Inscriptions of HARISENĀ, also called the Allahabad Inscription is engraved on a pillar at Allahabad and it is a panegyric on his royal patron Samudragupta (350 A.D.). From this we come to know that the gupta king was himself a poet, a kavirāja. Harisena was one of the court poets of Samudragupta. This inscription composed by him contains 9 stanzas in 30 lines along with an equal number of prose lines in praise of his royal patron. Although the prose lines are full of long compounds, his verses display a mastery of style rivalling that of Kālidāsa.

Another is an inscription of 473 A.D., composed by Vatsabbatti in connection with the erection of a temple of the Sun-god at Dasapura, the modern Mandasor. This inscription (called the Mandasor inscription) contains 44 stanzas and

Buddha according to the rules of the classical Sanskrit Epic shows how popular the Brahmanic poetry must have become by the 2nd cent. A.D.<sup>4</sup> Kālidāsa himself refers to dramatists like Bhāsa, Saumilla and Kaviputra; and dramas are only later forms of compositions developed over the kāvya form. Therefore it is obvious that the Kāvyas existed long long before Kālidāsa. The Girnar inscription, dated about 150-2 A.D., under the Mahākṣatrapa Rudradāman, which is in perfect kāvya style is another evidence of the above view. But the kāvya works of this earlier period except those of As'vaghosa, obviously eclipsed by the glory of Kālidāsa, have been lost almost irretrievably. If As'vaghosa's works have come down to us, it is because of the Buddhistic theme, there having been no other great poet depicting Buddha's life in a kāvya.

This early bloom of the Kāvya is further confirmed by the enormous influence of Vātsyāyana's Kāma-sūtras on the erotic and lyrical section of Sanskrit Literature. This 'Kāmasūtra, which no doubt belongs to a technical branch of literature, must be assigned to a very early date.

Thus the origin of court-epics takes us to a period much earlier than the Christian Era. In fact from the high regard later poets have for Vālmīki, it may be inferred that the Court epics (Kāvyas) came into being not long after 500 B.C., by which time the original portion of the Rāmāyaṇa is supposed to have been completed.

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4. We refer here only to the original text of this work which must have been very different from its present form.

1) 8TH CENTURY B.C. — Hippolyte Fanche holds that Kālidāsa must have been a contemporary of the posthumous son of Agnivarna, as his *Raghuvamsa* concludes with the mention of this king; and assigns him to the 8th cent. B.C.

2) 2ND CENTURY B.C.—Dr. G. Kunhan Raja thinks that Kālidāsa was a contemporary of king Agnimitra of the Suṅga dynasty, on the grounds 1) that this king is immortalised in his play *Mālavikāgnimitram*, 2) that there has been an unusual reference to Agnimitra in the *Bharatavākyā* of the same play and 3) that there has been a reference, though not relevantly, to the horse sacrifice of Puṣyamitra.

3) 1ST CENTURY B.C. (Traditional view) — Tradition associates Kālidāsa with Vikramāditya, the founder of the Vikrama Era (56 B.C.). In a couplet<sup>11</sup>, which is comparatively modern, he is represented as one of the nine literary gems at the court of this celebrated king. Some arguments are adduced by modern scholars also in support of this view.

4) 5TH CENTURY A.D. (The Gupta theory)—Dr. Keith holds that Kālidāsa must have flourished under Chandragupta II of Ujjain who had assumed the title 'Vikramāditya,' after defeating the Sākas in 395 A.D. Kālidāsa perhaps alludes to this title of his patron in the title of his play 'Vikramorvasīyam.' The title of his 'Kumāra-sambhavam' might again be a compliment to the

11. धन्वन्तरि-क्षपणक+अमरसिंह-शङ्कु-वेतालभट्ट-घटकपर्स-कालिदासः ।  
ख्यातो बराहमिद्धिरो नृपतेः सभायां रक्षानि वै वरस्त्रिन्व विक्रमस्य ॥

king on the birth of his son and successor, Kumāra-gupta by name.

5) 6TH CENTURY A.D. — There are three theories assigning Kālidāsa to the 6th cent. A.D.

a) KORUR THEORY—This theory is propounded by Fergusson. One Vikramāditya is known to have defeated the Mlecchas in a battle fought at Korur in 544 A.D. Fergusson holds that the Vikrama Era was founded to commemorate this event and that it was dated back by 600 years, to make it begin from 56 B.C. The tradition that Kālidāsa was a court poet of Vikramāditya combined with this ingenious view of Fergusson is the Korur theory that Kālidāsa must have lived by about 544 A.D.

b) THE RENAISSANCE THEORY of Max Muller—The learned Professor holds that the first period of Sanskrit Literature came to an end by about the 1st cent. B.C., as, after that century, frequent foreign invasions produced intellectual lethargy and literary inactivity. Thus there was a dark age for about five centuries in the history of Indian Literature. The reign of Vikramāditya in the 6th century,—here Max Muller agrees with Fergusson,—marked the dawn of the revival of all learning and literary activities and Kālidāsa was the leader of this renaissance.

c) NINE-GEMS THEORY of Dr. Kern—The verse about the nine literary gems of Vikramāditya's court mentions Kālidāsa as a contemporary of Amarasimha and Varāhamihira and six others of noted learning. This Amarasimha is identified with Amaradeva who constructed the great

Buddhistic shrine at Gayā. This shrine is referred to by Hiouen-T'sang (642 A.D.) and not by Fa-Hian who was in India in 414 A.D. So, it is presumed that Amarasimha built the shrine in between the two dates. By astronomical calculations, Varāhamihira is believed to have died in 587 A.D. Therefore Dr. Kern holds that Kālidāsa must have lived somewhere in the middle of the 6th cent. A.D.

6) 11TH CENTURY A.D.—In the work called Bhojacarita, Kālidāsa is described as the court-poet of Bhoja of Dhārā, thus bringing Kālidāsa down to the 11th cent. A.D. No importance need be attached to this, as the said work treats almost all the great poets of Sanskrit as contemporaries. But the word यवन in the Raghuvams'a IV 61, (यवनीमुख-पञ्चानां सेहे मधुमदं न सः) is interpreted by some to refer to the Mahomedans. According to them, as the Mahomedans first came to India only in the 7th cent. A.D., Kālidāsa must have flourished long after that.

An examination of these different theories will show that they are on very infirm grounds. The theories assigning our poet to the 8th cent. B.C. or 11th cent. A.D., are based on fictitious grounds and opposed to both tradition and epigraphic evidence. The 2nd cent. theory has not got the support of tradition, while the 6th cent. theories have been exploded<sup>12</sup> by the discovery of (i) the

12. The Epigraphic researches of Mr. Fleet have revealed that "The Vikrama Era of 57 B.C., far from being founded in 544 A.D. (as per Fergusson), had already been in use for more than a century previously under the name of the Malva Era which came to be called the Vikrama Era about 800 A.D."—See A.A. Macdonell, Op cit. page 323.

Mandasor inscription of 473 A.D., where its author reveals clear indications of his indebtedness to Kālidāsa and (ii) the Buddha-gayā inscription of 472 A.D. which mentions Kālidāsa by name.

There are some other arguments also by which an attempt has been made to place Kālidāsa in the 6th cent. A.D.; but none of them has any cogency. One of them is based upon the explanation given by the 14th century commentator Mallinātha of the word Dīgnāga occurring in the Meghasandes'a. He sees in it a punning allusion to one Dīgnāgācārya, a rival of the poet. It is uncertain whether Mallinātha meant a Buddhist teacher Dīgnāgācārya. That Dīgnāgācārya lived in the 6th cent. is again not probably true, as it is opposed to Chinese evidence which assigns him to 400 A.D. The other main argument is that Kālidāsa must have lived after Āryabhata 499 A.D., because he shows a knowledge of scientific astronomy borrowed from the Greeks. But an Indian astronomical treatise viz., the Romaka Siddhānta, written under greek influence has been found which is older than Āryabhata. It may be added that a passage of Kālidāsa's Raghuvams'a has been erroneously adduced to support this argument as implying that the eclipses of the moon are due to the shadow of the earth. The verse is—

अवैमि चैनामनघेति किंतु लोकापवादो बलवान्मतो भे ।

छाया हि भूमेः शशिनो मलत्वेनारोपिता शुद्धिमतः प्रजाभिः ॥ xiv 40.

This s'loka really refers only to the spots of the moon as caused by reflection of the earth in accordance with the teaching of the Purāṇas. Taking all these facts into consideration we find that no

argument assigning Kālidāsa to the 6th century is tenable.

Of the two other theories that remain, the Gupta theory (5th cent. A.D.) heralded by Dr. Keith has found a good following. In support of this theory an internal evidence is also adduced. Kālidāsa refers in his Raghuvamsa to the conquest of the Huns by the hero, namely, Raghu. This is no doubt an anachronism, for, Raghu, an ancestor of Rāma, could not have had anything to do with the Huns who for the first time appeared in the Indian history about 450 A.D. The allusion in the Raghuvamsa must therefore be referred to the defeat of the Huns in the Gupta period and Raghu identified with one of the Gupta kings. From the details of Raghu's life given in the poem, such as the world conquest and the horse-sacrifice, one would identify him with Samudragupta, his father Candragupta I being represented by Dilipa and his son Candragupta II or Vikramāditya by Aja. From the mention of the defeat of the Huns, some scholars have concluded that Kālidāsa must have lived after 455 A.D., the date of that defeat. But it has to be remembered that the defeat is alluded to have taken place not in India, but in the North-west in the basin of a river which may be identified with the Oxus. There seems therefore no need to assume a date later than 455 A.D. If this is viewed along with Vatsabhatti's indebtedness to Kālidāsa, the reign of Candragupta II (375 to 430 A.D.) may be the time when Kālidāsa flourished.

*Conclusion*—In all the above theories we find that the theorists are particular of associating their

views with some Vikramāditya or other as Kālidāsa's patron, not being able to set aside tradition. It is not unlikely that Kālidāsa has paid his tribute to this patron of his in the title of his play Vikramorvāsiyam. But as there have been several Vikramādityas, this tradition by itself does not help us to fix the date of Kālidāsa. One king Vikramāditya started the era known after him, which commences from 57 B.C. A good many scholars are inclined to think that it is very likely that this king was our poet's patron. In support of this view, it is pointed out that the law of inheritance as detailed in the Sākuntalam Act VI, that the property of a person who died childless would go to the king, was current in or about the 1st cent. B.C. Moreover, the Bauddha poet Asvaghosa (beginning of the 2nd cent. A.D.) has in all likelihood, borrowed his ideas from Kālidāsa, as the latter has been recognised as an original poet borrowing his subjects only from ancient authors like Vālmiki. These tend to show that Kālidāsa lived in the first cent. B.C. So this can be taken as the upper limit for Kālidāsa's date.

To fix the lower limit for the date of Kālidāsa we have some reliable grounds. The Buddhagayā inscription dated 472 A.D. of Mahānāman mentions Kālidāsa's name. Vatsabhatti's (Mandassor) inscription dated 473 A.D. betrays the influence of the Meghasāndesa of Kālidāsa. Bāna (c. 600 A.D.) refers to Kālidāsa in the introductory verse no. 16 of his Harsacarita. The Aihole inscription of 634 A.D. clearly mentions Kālidāsa's name along with Bhāravi's. Daṇḍin again refers to Kālidāsa in his Avantisundarikathā. From these evidences, we

may safely conclude that Kālidāsa must have lived before the middle of the 5th cent. A.D. at the latest.

The two limits mentioned above are, at present, generally accepted. The period thus arrived at, viz., 56 B.C. to 450 A.D. (5 centuries), is no doubt too long. But, in the absence of very reliable evidences, assigning Kālidāsa to any particular date or century would only be conjectural.

**His Life**—A number of stories have risen about Kālidāsa, but none of them is reliable. Some of them have the semblance of a biography, only to present chronological difficulties. One such story is the connection Kālidāsa is said to have had with the court of Kumāradāsa of Ceylon (500 A.D.) and another is his identification with king Mātraghupta of Kāśmīr (c. 300 A.D.). Still another is his association with king Bhoja of Dhārā (1005-1054 A.D.). There are several stories<sup>13</sup> explaining or justifying his name KĀLI-DĀSA.

We can gather some information about Kālidāsa from his own writings. His repeated reference to Ujjain indicates that he must have spent at least a part of his life in that city. His dwelling upon the charms of that city in his Meghadūtam makes it clear that he loved it much. His description of the *Tour* about the whole of India and even into the regions beyond the borders of India in the Raghuvamsām, makes any one believe that Kālidāsa himself must have made such a grand tour. Mountains seem to have impressed him deeply.

13. For details see our Introduction to *Vikramorvāsiyam* (1964) P. 20 f. and to *Raghuvamsām* canto xiv (1964) P. 6f.

As acutely observed by a critic, he is the only Sanskrit poet who has described the saffron flower which is exclusively Kāśmitian.

His works—The Mahākāvyas written by Kālidāsa are two,<sup>14</sup> viz., the Raghuvams'a and the Kumārasambhava. Both of them are noted for independence of treatment and poetic beauty.

THE RAGHUVAMS'A<sup>15</sup> consists of 19 cantos and is clearly incomplete. Six more cantos are supposed to have been written but they have not been discovered. As the very name suggests the poem describes the glories of the kings of the race of Raghu who performed the Visvajit sacrifice. Thus it gives us an account of Dillipa (father of Raghu), Raghu, Aja, Dasaratha, Rāma and some of his successors. The story of Rāma occupies six cantos, nearly one third of the length of the whole poem. It is in the XV canto that Kālidāsa speaks of Vālmiki as the 'First poet.' The poem abounds in apt and striking similes. Its style is simple and the descriptions never weary the reader by their length.

THE KUMĀRASAMBHAVA consists of 17 cantos, but only the first seven of them are probably Kālidāsa's. Mallinātha has not commented upon the last ten cantos. But that may be on account of the amorous character of the sentiments there

14. Kunteśvara dautyam is another work not yet discovered but known only by a quotation in Kṣemendra's Aucityavicāracarca. Kālidāsa is believed to have written this in the court of Kunteśvara where he was sent as an ambassador by Vikramāditya.

15. See our introduction to Raghuvams'a xiv, (1964) for the circumstances inducing Kālidāsa to write the work.

expressed which renders them unsuitable for educational purposes for which Kālidāsa's works are widely used. The 8th canto is by some people regarded as Kālidāsa's and it may be so, for, it is quoted by Vāmana (8th cent. A D.).

As the name signifies, the poem deals with the birth of Kumāra, the war-god. The first seven sargas 'are devoted to the courtship and wedding of S'iva and Pārvatī,' the parents of Kumāra. Description is the outstanding characteristic of this work. The last ten cantos are of an excessively erotic character. The poem concludes with the destruction of Tāraka, the demon, by Kumāra.

**KĀLIDĀSA'S GREATNESS**—Even in the first rank of greatness, we may distinguish two classes of poets. In some the poetic fancy prevails often at the expense of the artistic sense; the other class is formed of those in whom the artistic feeling is superior to fancy. Kālidāsa is remarkable in combining both these features. In him we have a harmonious blending of both. Again some poets excel in describing nature; others in interpreting the human heart. In this respect also we find a welcome blend in Kālidāsa. Although he belongs to the rank of conventional poets, he maintains remarkable freshness and avoids all the common blemishes of his class, such as over exaggeration, punning and over doing of description. There is no rhetorical expansion, no mere verbage. The style is sweet and smooth-flowing and the sentiments invariably natural.

Numerous commentaries have been written on Kālidāsa's kāvyas. MALLINĀTHA'S is the most popular among all of them.

## POST KALIDASAN EPIC POETS

**BUDDHAGHOṢA (4th cent. A.D.)**

[*Work—Padyacūdāmani (Mahākāvya)*]

Buddhaghosa, as the name itself suggests, is a Buddhist writer. His poem Padyacūdāmani is in 10 cantos and describes the life of the Buddha, with very slight variation from the account given by Asvaghosa. The work betrays the influence of Kālidāsa and Asvaghosa clearly. As Buddhaghosa is learnt to have been sent to Ceylon in 357 A.D. to secure a Pāli version of the commentaries on the Tripitakas and as his own work was translated to Chinese in 488 A.D., his date may be taken as the latter half of the 4th cent. A.D.

**MENTHA (5th cent.)**

[*Work—HAYAGRĪVA-VADHA (Mahākāvya)*]

Kālidāsa eclipsed many lesser epic poets and the works of most of them are lost to us. An epic called HAYAGRĪVA-VADHA, reputed to have been written by MENTHA or BHARTRMENTHA (also called HASTIPAKA) and which is not yet discovered, is said to have been so charming a work that king Mātrgupta, himself a poet, rewarded its author 'by giving him a golden dish to place below it when it was being bound, lest the flavour should escape.' Mankha places Menta beside Subandhu, Bhāravi and Bāṇa. The anthologies cite some pretty verses as of Menta. The first verse of the Hayagrīva-vadha is quoted by Rājasekhara in his Kāvya-mīmāṃsa.

According to Kalhaṇa, Mātrgupta was a predecessor of Pravarasena. Hence Menta, a con-

temporary of <sup>16</sup>Māṭrgupta, is to be placed in the 5th cent. A.D.

### PRAVARASENA (6th cent.)

[ *Work* — SETUBANDHA (Mahākāvya in Prākṛt) ]

SETUBANDHA also called Setukāvya or RĀVAṄA-VADHA is an epic in Mahārāṣṭrī Prākṛt. It relates the story of Rāma and commemorates, as it is stated, the building of a bridge of boats across the river Vitastā, i.e., the Jhelum by king Pravarasena of Kashmir. As both Daṇdin and Bāṇa pay a glowing tribute to the author of this epic, its date cannot be later than the 6th cent. A.D.

This work is probably by Pravarasena who was himself a poet and a patron of literature. There is also a view ascribing it to Kālidāsa; but the artificial style and numerous compounds of the poem go against such a view.

### BHĀRAVI (6th cent.)

[ *Work* — KIRĀTĀRJUNIYA (Mahākāvya) ]

<sup>17</sup> KIRĀTĀRJUNIYAM is an epic in 18 cantos by BHĀRAVI who is mentioned together with Kālidāsa in the <sup>18</sup>Aihole inscription dated 634 A.D. So Bhāravi should be placed at the latest in the 6th

16. Māṭrgupta, king of Kāśmir (c. 430 A.D.) is mistaken by some to be Kālidāsa himself. Keith describes it as 'unwise conjecture.' See his Hist. of Skt. Lit. page 132.

17. This is the third among the five famous Mahākāvyas viz., Raghuvams'a, Kumārasambhava, Kirātārjuniya, S'is'upālavadha and Naiṣadha.

18. येनायोजिनवेश्मस्थिरमर्थविधौ विवेकिना जिनवेश्म ।

स जयतां रविकीर्तिः कविताश्रितकालिदासभारतिकीर्तिः ॥

cent. A.D. The subject matter of the poem is the fight between Arjuna and S'iva in the guise of a KIRĀTA, which is clearly borrowed from the Vanaparvan of the Mahābhārata. The poem is marked for its eloquence in expression and vigour of thought. His language has a natural sweetness (प्रकृतिमधुरा भारविगिरः) which is rarely equalled in Sanskrit works. If Kālidāsa's style is 'delicate and graceful', Bhāravi's is 'stately and dignified.' The beauty of a particular verse<sup>19</sup> has made Bhāravi be known as 'Chatra Bhāravi.' His expressions which are pregnant, with meaning rank with Kālidāsa's similes.<sup>20</sup> But Bhāravi is fond of verbal feats from which Kālidāsa is absolutely free. In the 15th canto of the poem there are some verses which give a particular sense when read in the usual manner and quite a different sense when read in the reverse order.<sup>21</sup> There are also verses composed in only two or three letters.<sup>22</sup> Abstruse grammatical forms and mannerisms are in abundance in Bhāravi.

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19. उकुल्लस्थलनलिनीवनादमुष्मादुदधूतः सरसिजसंभवः परागः ।  
वात्याभिर्वियति विवर्जितः समन्तादाधत्ते कनकमयातपत्रलक्ष्मीम् ॥

20. उमा कालिदासस्य भारवेर्थगौरवम् । [—Kirāta. v 39.  
दण्डनः पदललित्यं माधे सन्ति त्रयो गुणाः ॥

21. निशितासिरतोमीको न्यैजतेऽमरणा रुचा ।  
सारतो न विरोधी न स्वाभासो भरवानुत ॥ xv 22.  
तनुवारभसो भास्वानधीरोऽविनतोरसा ।  
चारुणा रमते जन्ये कोऽभीतो रसिताशिनि ॥ xv 23.

22. न नोननुन्नो नुन्नानो नाना नानानना ननु ।  
नुन्नोऽनुन्नो ननुन्नेनो नानेना नुन्ननुन्ननुत् ॥ xiv 14.

The *Kirātārjuniya* is Bhāravi's only poem known to us. Mallinātha has commented on this poem. He describes Bhāravi's language as नारिकेलपाक and says that 'the sweetness of his poetry is enveloped in a garb of apparent ruggedness.'

### BHATTI (7th cent.)

[*Work—RĀVANĀVADHA (Mahākāvya)*]

*RĀVANĀVADHA*, more generally known as *Bhattikāvya*, is by Bhatti. It is a poem in 22 cantos dealing with the story of the *Rāmāyana*. The work was composed for the practical purpose of illustrating certain grammatical forms and poetic figures. It professes to have been written at Valabhi under king S'ridharasena. But as several princes of that name are known to have reigned there in the 6th or 7th cent. A.D., its exact date is uncertain.

The author's name Bhatti is usually identified with Bhartrhari whose death was at 650 A.D. Some critics identify him with Vatsabhatti also. These identifications are based mainly on the similarity of names and hence have not met with the approval of critics.

### MĀGHA (7th cent.)

[*Work—S'IS'UPĀLAVADHA (Mahākāvya)*]

THE *S'IS'UPĀLAVADHA* of Māgha is a very popular poem. It is generally admired for the happy combination in it of the similes of Kālidāsa, the depth of thought of Bhāravi and the gracefulness of expression of Daṇdin.<sup>23</sup> The view of the

23. See note 20 above.

Pandits, is that Bhāravi's glory was "bedimmed by Māgha."

At the end of his poem, Māgha tells us that he was the son of Dattaka and grandson of Suprabhadeva, minister of a king named Dharmadeva. He appears to have been the native of Gujerat. Jacobi places him in the 6th cent. A.D., though others assign to him a later date. Śrī Harṣa's Nāgānanda is referred to in Māgha's poem. Śrī Harṣa (the patron of Bāna) ruled between 606-648 A.D. Thus Māgha's date is clearly the close of the 7th cent. A.D. At the same time it is very likely that he is later than Bhāravi as judged from the saying तावद्वा मारवेभीति यावन्माधव्य नोदयः<sup>24</sup>. No other work besides the Sisupālavadha by the writer is known to us; but it is probable that he wrote other works also, for, old anthologies ascribe to him stanzas not found in the Sisupālavadha.

The poem describes how Sisupāla, prince of Caidya, was killed by Kṛṣṇa and exhibits nearly all the features which are usually associated with court epics. Thus, throughout the poem, we can trace the influence of purānic mythology not only in plot but also in the allusions and figures used. There is also to be found the conventional description common to works of this kind, besides the usual exaggeration. We cannot fail to note the tendency to indulge in punning of various sorts, though it is perhaps not so common in Māgha as in others. The 19th canto is full of metrical puzzles. It also contains a stanza which if read

24. तावद्वा मारवेभीति यावन्माधव्य नोदयः ।  
उदिते तु पुनर्भीषे मारवेभी रवेरिव ॥

backwards is identical with the preceding stanza read in the ordinary way. Māgha was a great grammarian and his knowledge of grammar and lexicon is glaringly apparent in his poem.<sup>25</sup>

Māgha's style is throughout dignified and moves majestically, especially when the nature of the subject requires it. Otherwise it is simple generally, in that sense of the word as it is understood with reference to works written in a literary language. It is embellished with picturesque figures and imaginative touches. The descriptions of situations and the narration of events are in general poetic, but there is occasionally some exhibition of pedantry. It is probably more a fault with the age than the poet.<sup>26</sup>

### KUMĀRADĀSA (7th cent.)

[Work—JĀNAKĪHARĀNA (Mahākāvya)]

JĀNAKĪHARĀNA is a poem in 20 cantos by Kumāradāsa, a supposed king of Ceylon. The poem deals with the story of the Rāmāyana, as its name itself suggests. It abounds in S'abdālankāras and the 18th canto is noted for its *bandha-s'lokas*. Rājas'ekhara praises the abilities<sup>27</sup> of this poet.

Tradition associates Kālidāsa with Kumāradāsa, king of Ceylon. But there is no historical

25. नवसर्गं गते मादे नवशब्दो न विद्यते is a common saying.

26. Māgha is sometimes described as GHĀNTĀ-MĀGHA, because of the following stanza in his Sisupālavadha—

उद्यति विततोर्ध्वरश्मिरज्जावहिमस्त्वौ हिमधाम्नि याति चास्तम् ।

वहति गिरिरयं विलम्बिव द्वयपरिवारितवारणेन्द्रलीलाम् ॥ — iv 20.

27. जानकीहरणं कर्तुं रघुवंशे स्थिते सति ।

कविः कुमारदासश्च रावणश्च यदि क्षमः ॥ — Rājas'ekhara.

evidence in support of this traditional view. No doubt a king of that name ruled in Ceylon in about 517-526 A.D. But this Kumāradāsa cannot be the author of the Jānakiharana which reveals the author's knowledge of the Kāśikāvṛtti, a work on grammar written about 650 A.D. It is therefore likely that the poem belongs to the closing part of the 7th cent. A.D.

### VĀKPATI (8th cent.)

[*Work—GAUDAVAHO (Prākṛt poem)*]

GAUDAVAHO, a Prākṛt kāvya is by Vākpati who may be placed in the early part of the 8th century A.D. The poet admits indebtedness to Bhavabuūti. Keith describes his work as 'a perfect master-piece of bad style'. The poem is of interest to us just because it shows 'how closely Prākṛt poetry kept pace with Sanskrit poetry in the degradation of style'.

The theme of the poem is the defeat of a Gauda prince by king Yasovarman of Kanoj who was the patron of the poet.

### RATNĀKARA (9th cent.)

[*Work—HARAVIJAYA (Mahākāvya)*]

HARAVIJAYA, a huge poem in 48 cantos, is by a Kashmirian poet named Rājānaka Ratnākara Vāgisvara. The poet flourished under Br̥haspati or Cippata Jayāditya and Avantivarman; and hence he must have been in his prime about 850 A.D. The theme of the poem is S'iva's slaying Andhaka who is S'iva's own off-spring. The poem is enormously long and lacks all sense of proportion; for example, seven long cantos are devoted to

narrate the conversation between S'iva's messenger and the demon and three full cantos to describe the amorous sports of S'iva's retinue. The author seems to vie with Bāna in style. The poem abounds in yamakas, thus involving a sacrifice of sense to sound.

### HARICANDRA (9th cent.)

[Works—1. DHARMA-S'ARMĀBHÝUDAYAM 2. JIVANDHARACAMPŪ]

DHARMA-S'ARMĀBHÝUDAYAM is a poem in 21 cantos by Haricandra, a digambara Jain. The theme of the poem is the story of the 15th Tirthankara named Dharmānātha. The poet has to be placed in the 9th cent. A.D. at the latest, as he has been alluded to by Rājasekbara (of the 10th cent.) in his play Karpūramāñjari.

The Jivandharacampū is another work of this poet. His language is 'charming and takes rank with the best of its kind.'

### SIVASVĀMIN (9th cent.)

[Works—KHAPPĀNĀBHÝUDAYAM (Mahākāvya); others lost]

KHAPPĀNĀBHÝUDAYAM, a poem in 20 cantos, is by the Buddhist poet Sivasvāmin. He was the court poet of king Avantivarman who ruled over Kashmir between 855 and 884 A.D. The theme of the poem is a legend found in the Avadāna-sātaka, dealing with the conversion into Buddhism of king Khappāna himself as a result of his attacking Prasenajit, the Buddhist ruler of S'rāvasti. The poem opens with an invocation to Buddha and follows in general the plan of the S'is'upālavadha and Kirātārajuniya. The poet is said to have been a prolific writer, although Khappānābhýudayam is the only poem preserved to us.

## ABHINANDA I &amp; II (9th cent.)

[*Works*—1. RĀMACARITA of Abhinanda I (Mahākāvya)  
2. KĀDAMBARĪKATHĀSĀRA of Abhinanda II (Mahākāvya)]

RĀMACARITA is a long poem relating the story of the Rāmāyana. The editor of the Baroda edition of this work has shown that Abhinanda left this work incomplete at the end of 36 cantos and that Bhimakavi, a fairly unknown poet, added four cantos to complete it. But a manuscript at Madras is said to stop with the 67th verse of the 50th canto. Adhinanda's narration is graceful, his verses are pretty and his poetic fancy is enchanting. That is why his Rāmacarita is profusely quoted by Bhoja, Mammata and Mahimabhatta.

Abhinanda owns king Hāravarṣa Yuva-rāja as his patron and mentions that he accorded to him a seat on his throne in appreciation of his talents. This king is identified with king Devapāla of the Pāla dynasty of Bengal, who flourished in the 2nd half of the 9th cent. A.D. This fixes up the date of Abhinanda also.

There is another ABHINANDA, son of the logician Jayanta Bhatta belonging to the same century. He has written the KĀDAMBARĪKATHĀSĀRA which is an epitome of Bāna's Kādambarī, in the form of an epic in eight cantos.

## HALĀYUDHA (10th cent.)

[*Work*—KAVIRAHASYA (Mahākāvya)]

KAVIRAHASYA is a kāvya composed by Halāyudha on the lines of Bhatti to illustrate the rules of grammar. The hero of the poem is Kṛṣṇa III of the Rāstrakūta dynasty (c 940–955 A.D.); and

he is also the patron of the poet. Therefore the poet is to be placed in the 10th cent. A.D.

As Keith observes, the pedantic side predominates in the work, as it is really 'meant to illustrate the modes of formation of the present tense of Sanskrit roots, but incidentally serves as a eulogy of the Rāstrakūta king Kṛṣṇa III.'

The Kavirahasya is a good guide to poets. The poem is also called Kaviguhya or Apas'abdābhāsa.

### KSEMENDRA (11th cent.)

[*Works*— Six Kāvyas; One Alāṅkāra work; others lost.]

Bṛhatkathāmañjari, Rāmāyanamanjari, Bhāratamañjari, and the Dasañvatāracarita are four long poems by the Kasmerian poet Kṣemendra. Brhatkathāmañjari is a brief narration in Sanskrit of the story contained in Guṇādhya's Brhatkathā which is not preserved to us and which is said to have been written in the Paisācī dialect. This work will be noticed under popular tale also. The other three works narrate the respective epic stories indicated by their titles. His Padya-kādambarī is the story of Kādambarī turned into verse, while his Rājāvalī is a history of Kāśmir like Kalhana's Rājataranginī. Many other works of his are known only by name. Kṣemendra was a student of Abhinavagupta and has written the Aucityavicāracarca, a work on Alāṅkāra-sāstra, wherein he cites two other works of his, viz., Sasivamsa-mahākāvya and Amṛtatarāṅgakāvya, both of which are lost. He was in the court of king Anantha of Kashmir who ruled between 1029 and 1064 A.D. He became an ardent devotee of Viṣṇu by the favour of one Somapāda and earned the name of Vyāsadāsa by writing the Bhāratamañjari.

## MANKHA (12th cent.)

[*Works*—1. *S'RĪKANTHACARITA* (*Mahākāvya*), 2. *ALAṄKĀRASARVASVA* (a gloss) and 3 *Alaṅkārasūtras*.]

*S'RĪKANTHACARITA* in 25 cantos is the work of the Kashmirian poet Mankha, known also as Maṅkhaka. The poem deals with the destruction of Tripura by S'iva and was written about 1140 A.D.

Mankha was one of the four brothers who all were writers and officials in the court of Jayasimha who ruled in Kashmir between 1127 and 1159 A.D. One brother Alāṅkāra was the minister of Jayasimha, while Mankha himself was an ambassador at Konkan.

Mankha was the pupil of Ruyyaka on whose Alāṅkāra aphorisms he has written a gloss called *Alaṅkārasarvasva*. Besides this, he is the author of some Alāṅkāra sūtras also. While Mankha has a wonderful mastery over the Sanskrit language, he lacks lucidity of expression. His descriptions are dreary. The narration is dull and uninteresting also but for its historical value.

## JAYARATHA AND VĀGBHATA (12th cent.)

*HARACARITACINTĀMANI* of Jayaratha, a Kashmirian poet is a store-house of S'aiva myths, practices and beliefs. *NEMINIRVĀNA* of Vāgbhata deals with the story of Neminātha, a Jain saint. Vāgbhata is better known by his contributions to Alāṅkāra literature.

## SANDHYĀKARANANDIN (12th cent.)

[*Work*—*RĀMAPĀLACARITA* (*Mahākāvya*)]

*RĀMAPĀLACARITA* by Sandhyākaranandin is an instance of 'the triumph of misplaced ingenuity'

as it refers in each stanza to the history of Rāma and also to the king Rāmapāla of Bengal who flourished at the close of the 11th cent. A.D.

### DHANANJAYA (12th cent.)

[*Work—RĀGHAVAPĀNDAVIYA (Mahākāvya)*]

RĀGHAVAPĀNDAVIYA, or DVI SANDHĀNAKĀVYA as it is also called, is another instance of 'misplaced ingenuity' in the words of Dr. Keith. This work is by Dhanañjaya, also called S'rutakīrti, a digambara Jain, who wrote it between 1123 and 1140 A.D. The poem narrates simultaneously the stories of both Rāma and the Pāñdava princes, each of its stanzas allowing itself to two different interpretations, one applicable to Rāma and the other to the Pāñdavas.

### KAVIRĀJA (12th cent.)

[*Works—RĀGHAVAPĀNDAVIAM and PĀRIJĀTAHARANAM*]

Another RĀGHAVAPĀNDAVIYA, similar to the above one of Dhanañjaya in almost all respects, is by Kavirāja or Kavirājasūri or Kavirājapāṇḍita, his real name being Mādhava-Bhatta. He mentions the name of his patron as Kāmadeva who is probably the Kadamba king (1182-97). Telling two different stories simultaneously in a single poem is a feat no doubt. But the nature of Sanskrit is such that it is possible to break up the lines of the verses variously into words and get different meanings out of them. Even whole words of the language have different meanings and hence the Sanskrit poet finds it almost impossible to check the temptation of indulging in punning. Although it is true that indulgence in verbal feats hinders poetic fancy, Kavirāja displays his talents both ways.

PĀRIJĀTAHARANA, a poem in ten cantos, is another work of Kavirāja. This poem deals with the story of Kṛṣṇa's bringing the Pārijāta tree down to the earth to please Satyabhāmā. The style of this poem is elegant and the language simple. Kavirāja is noted for his VAKROKTI and ranks himself with Bāṇa and Subhandu in the use of that mode of expression.<sup>28</sup>

### HARADATTASŪRI (12th cent. ?)

RĀGHAVA-NAIŚADHĪYA is another poem of the class of Rāghavapāṇḍaviya, dealing simultaneously with the stories of Rāma and Nala. This work is by Haradattasūri of unknown date.

### SRĪHARŚA (12th cent.)

[Works—1. NAIŚADHA 2. KHAṄDANAKHAṄDAKHĀDYA]

NAIŚADHĪYACARITA, or NAIŚADHA in short, is the most important among the Mahākāvyas of the later ages. It describes the story of Nala, king of Niśadha. In its extant form, the poem contains 22 cantos; but tradition carries it to the length of 60 or even 120 cantos.

This poem is by S'rīharsa<sup>29</sup> a poet in the court of Jayacandra of Kanoj, who belonged to the latter part of the 12th cent. A.D. He was the son of Hira and Māmalladevi. His poem Naiśadha,

28. सुवन्धुर्बण्मद्वश्च कविराज इति लयः ।

वक्रोक्तिमार्गलिपुणाश्रुयो विद्यते न वा ॥—राघवपाण्डवीये i 41.

29. It must be remembered that this S'rīharsa is different from Sri Harṣa, the royal patron of Bāṇa (7th cent.) and the author of the plays Nāgānanda, Ratnāvalī and Priyadarśikā.

which is recognised as one of the Pañca-mahā-kāvyas, won him the title Narabhārati. The Indian pandit is always full of praise for S'riharsa. According to him 'all mythology is at his fingers' ends. Rhetoric he rides over. He sees no end to the flow of his descriptions.' But to a general critic, the poem is full of blemishes. The beauty of the simple and romantic story of Nala is almost spoilt by the poet's elaborate literary conceits and lack of artistic taste. The style of the poem is again tough and the reader can rarely approach it with confidence.<sup>30</sup> The poem abounds in yamakas and puns. S'ri Harṣa's descriptions of Nature are of a very high order. His vocabulary is extensive and his power of observation admirable.

KHANDANA-KHĀNDĀ-KHĀDYA, a philosophical work, is the most outstanding among the many works of S'ri Harṣa. His other poems referred to at the end of some of the cantos of the Naiṣadha have not come down to us. The above philosophical work which is a destructive critique of the views of Udayanācārya, shows that he was a great logician also.

### LATER MAHĀKĀVYAS

The history of Sanskrit Kāvya literature is usually described as 'a story of its decline.' It has been so because the later epic writers became imitators of imitations and indulged in literary conceits. This story does not stop with S'riharsa. It continues without much improvement in the quality of the kāvyas, except perhaps in the case

30. नैषधं विद्वदौषधम् ।

of some which have been the productions of poets of extraordinary merit and distinction.

### KĀLIDĀSA ?

NALODAYA or the RISE OF NALA in four cantos is wrongly ascribed to Kālidāsa. The poem exhibits skill in the manipulation of the most varied and artificial metres and the usual tricks of style of the later kāvyas and thus unmistakably it must have been the product of a very late age. The second of the four cantos of the poem is the longest and purely lyrical describing the joys of the newly wedded couple.

YUDHĪSTHIRA-VIJAYA in eight cantos and RĀKSASA-KĀVYA in 20 stanzas are also wrongly attributed to Kālidāsa.

Some scholars think that the author of the Nalodaya is one VĀSUDEVA, a poet of Kerala.

### KṛṣṇĀNANDA (13th cent.)

SAHRDAYĀNANDA in 15 cantos is a beautiful poem dealing with the story of Nala, by Kṛṣṇānanda of Pūri. The style of the poem is simple and charming. The poet is to be placed in the 13th cent., as Visvanātha of the 14th cent. refers to him, in his Sāhityadarpana.

### AMARACANDRA (13th cent.)

BĀLABHĀRATA<sup>31</sup> by Amaracandra is a poem of high merit. It is virtually an epitome of the Mahābhārata, as it narrates the story in the order

31. There is another Bālabhārata in twenty cantos by Agastya whose patron was Pratāparudradeva of Warrangal (1294—1325 A.D.)

of the parvas. This poem is often placed on a par with the *Raghuvams'a*. The poet was a Jain priest. King Visāladeva, son of Vīradhavala, king of Gujerat (1243-1262 A.D.), was pleased with the greatness of this poet and honoured him highly, as mentioned in Merutunga's *Prabandhacintāmaṇi* (14th cent.) and Rājas'ekhara's *Prabandhakos'a*. Therefore Amaracandra must have flourished in the 13th cent. A.D.

*PADMĀNANDA-KĀVYĀ* or *JINENDRA-CARITA*, describing the life of Jina, is another poem by Amaracandra. *KĀVYAKALPALATĀ*, *KAVIS'IKṢĀ*, *KALĀ-KALĀPA* are worthy of mention among his many treatises on poetics and other technical subjects.

### VENKATĀNĀTHA (14th cent.)

[*Works*—(121 in all): *MAHĀKĀVYAS*, *PRĀKRĀT POEMS*, etc.]

*YĀDAVĀBHŪDAYA*, a *mahākāvya* in 24 cantos, is of a very high order. It deals with the story of Kṛṣṇa in an easy flowing style. This work, written by Venkatanātha, has been commented upon by the great philosopher-poet Appayyadiksita of the 16th cent. Venkatanātha, more commonly known as *Vedāntades'ika*, was both a philosopher and poet. He was a native of Tūppil near Kañcī. He was a versatile scholar and as such he wrote works on almost all branches of knowledge. His collected works number 121, of which many are on *Viśiṣṭādvaita* philosophy.

While his *Yādavābhūdaya* is a *mahākāvya* which can be placed on a level with Kālidāsa's *Raghuvams'a*, his *HAMSA-SANDESA* is a fine lyric and is after the *Meghasandesa*. His *PĀDUKĀ-SAHASRAM* is a thousand verses in praise of the glory of Rāma's sandals. His *SAṄKALPA-SŪRYODAYA*

is an allegorical drama after the model of Kṛṣṇa-mis'ra's Prabodhacandrodaya. ACYUTA-SATAKAM is a Prākṛt poem in praise of Viṣṇu. SUBHĀŚITANĪVI is a didactic poem like the Nitisatakam of Bhartrhāri.

Venkatanātha was born in 1268 and passed away in November 1369. He is worshipped as a saint by many devotees even to this day.

### GANGĀDEVI (14th cent.)

MADHURĀ-VIJAYAM, also called VĪRAKAMPARĀYACARITAM, which is now available only as a fragment, is by the poetess Gaṅgādevī who was the consort of Kampana, the 2nd son of Bukka I (1343-1379 A.D.). The verses of the poem are melodious and pretty. The poem deals with the exploits of Kampana and his victory over the sultan of Madhura.

### VĀMANA BHATTA BĀNA (15th cent.)

[Works— 2 MAHĀKĀVYĀS; other POEMS, PLAYS etc.]

NALĀBHUDAYA in 8 cantos and RAGHUNĀTHA-CARITA in 30 cantos are two mahākāvyas by Vāmana-Bhatta Bāna who was the pupil of Vidyāraṇya. Both the kāvyas are of easy style. The poet migrated to the court of Pedda Komati Vemabhūpāla of Kēndavīdu (1403-1420 A.D.) and enjoyed his patronage during the latter half of his life.

He is reputed to have written many works. His HAMSA-SANDEŚĀ is a lyric in imitation of the Meghasandesa. His S'RNGĀRABHŪṢĀNA, a Bhāṇa, was enacted annually at Vijayanagar during the festival of Virūpākṣa. The PĀRVATĪ-PĀRINAYA, a play in 5 Acts, is also attributed to this poet. His KANAKALEKHĀ, is a pretty play in 4 Acts describing

the marriage of two Vidyādharas born on earth by the curse of a sage. More important than all these in his BRHATKATHĀ-MĀÑJARĪ in verse which, a fragment as it is, contains the story of Kādambarī as given out by Bāna and says in the end इयमेव कथा बाणेन चहुल्लीकृता कादम्बरीकथात्वेन ।

The poetry and learning of Vāmana-bhatta are of a high order. His 'resolve to remove the deep-rooted ill-fame that after Bāna there was no poet capable of a fine writing in prose' resulted in the production of his VEMABHŪPĀLA-CARITA or VĪRANĀRĀYANA-CARITA as it is also called. This work will be noticed later under Historical Kāvya.

### CIDAMBARA (16th cent.)

RĀGHAVA-YĀDAVA-PĀNDAVĪYA,<sup>32</sup> a poem in three cantos, is by Cidambara who was patronised by king Venkata I (1586—1614) of Vijayanagar. This poem relates simultaneously the three stories of Rāma, Kṛṣṇa and the Pāndavas and thus it is a Trisandhāna-kāvya. This device is further extended in his PĀÑCA-KALYĀNA-CAMPŪ which relates at once the stories of the marriages of Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Viṣṇu, S'iva and Subrahmanyā.

### VENKATĀDHVARIN (17th cent.)

YĀDAVA-RĀGHAVĪYA, treating the stories of both Kṛṣṇa and Rāma together, is by Venkatādhvarin of Visvagunādars'a fame. The author has tried here to imitate Kavirāja's Rāghava-pāndaviya. But the work lacks poetic beauty. The language is terse with complicated alliterations.

32. There is another similar work of this very name by Anantācārya of Mysore.

### NILAKANTHA DİKSİTA (17th cent.)

S'IVALILĀRNĀVA of Nilakanthadiksita, in 22 cantos, is a beautiful poem describing all the 64 Līlās of S'iva, who, under the name Hālāsyānātha, is the presiding deity at Mathura. His another work GAÑGĀVATARĀNA relates in 8 cantos the story of the descent of the celestial Ganges to the earth.

Nilakanthadiksita was of a versatile genius. He produced many works on all branches of Sanskrit literature. His NīLAKAÑTHAVIJAYA-CAMPŪ and the didactic poem KALIVIDAMBANAM are the most important among them.

Nilakanthadiksita was the premier of king Tirumalanāyaka. Moreover, he himself gives us the date of his composing the Nīlakanthavijaya in chapter I there-of as after the lapse of 4738 years in the Kali Era, which corresponds to 1637—38 A.D. The poet was a staunch S'aivite and was well versed in S'rīkañtha philosophy.

### OTHER MAHĀKĀVYAS

THE RUKMINĪ-KALYĀNA-KĀVYA (in 10 cantos) of Rājacūdāmanidiksita, the JĀNAKĪ-PARINAYAM (in 8 cantos) of Cākrakāvi and the PATAÑJALICARITAM (in 8 cantos) of Rāmabhadra-diksita are three other charming mahākāvyas of the 17th century.

Some very important mahākāvyas such as the Navasāhasāṅka-caritam of Parimala, the Vikramāṅkadevacaritam of Bilhana and the Rājatarāṅgiṇī of Kalhana will be dealt with in the next section, as their themes are historical.

## CHAPTER IV

### HISTORICAL KĀVYĀ

The tendency of the Indian mind has been till recently, to cultivate an indifference towards worldly achievements and to care more for the life beyond death. Thus the Indian writer of the past never felt it worth the while to record the exploits of men. Men's actions are believed to be the outcome of their own earlier actions done in a previous birth. Nature is not held to run its natural course. Divine power is considered to interfere with nature, providing ample scope for what we may term the miraculous. Such being the mentality of the Indians from ancient times, it is not at all strange that they lacked the historical sense. But chronology and chronicling cannot be totally avoided by any people. Thus even in the early Vedic hymns we have the references to the ancient clans and their wars. The Purāṇas also give genealogies and dates although they are sometimes hopelessly inaccurate. No doubt we notice in these records, invariably the writer preferring the general to the particular and evincing more interest in 'edification by constructing pleasing ancestries' rather than in an accurate record of facts. We notice in the legends of the Buddha, a somewhat serious approach to history made by the Buddhists. The MAHĀVĀMSĀ of Mahānāman is perhaps the greatest creation of the Buddhists in the 5th cent. A.D., but it clearly betrays the lack of any real historical sense of the monks. We may mention here the Pattāvalis of

Jains, as they preserve lists of their Tīrthāṅkaras, all of whom are described to have had a stereotyped life. But inscriptions are of a different type. They contribute substantially to Indian history as they record, although in a poetic way, specific exploits of the rulers of the day. The Girnar and Nasik inscriptions of the age of Rudradāman and those of Vatsabhātti and Harisena of the Gupta age have been, for instance, of very significant historical value.

The natural beginning of historical compositions may be traced in the Kāvyas of eminent poets where we have suggestive references to some important events in the lives of the rulers who in all probability had patronised the particular poets. Thus, in the conquest of Raghu in the *Raghuvamsa*, Kālidāsa is believed to have referred to the conquest of the Huns by the Guptas. And the title *Kumārasambhava* alludes, as some believe, to Kumāragupta's birth. The *Setubandha* is said to have been written to commemorate the building of a historic bridge of boats across the *Vitastā* by king Pravarasena of Kashmir. In fact, the definition of a *Mahākāvya* as stated by Dandin includes among the themes to be dealt with a historical event also which shows that historical kāvyas existed even prior to Dandin.

### BĀNA's HARŚACARITA (7th cent.)

The first historical kāvya that has come down to us is *Harśacarita* which is in the form of a prose romance and not of a chronicle. The work is by Bāna (or Bāna Bhatta) of the 7th cent. A.D. Although the work professes to relate the life and

deeds of Śrī Harśavardhana, whose court the poet himself adorned, the historical material it contains is very meagre as fancy has been freely mixed up with fact. But the preface to the work gives us some valuable information on literary history. It mentions as famous the names of Vyāsa, Bhattāra Haricandra, Sātavāhana, Pravarasena, Bhāsa, Kālidāsa and also the authors of Vāśavadatta and Br̥hatkathā. Again the first two and a half Ucchvāsas give out the personal history of Bāna himself. The work supplies in addition, a valuable picture of the life and manners of the times.

Description and narration are very closely blended together even in the *Harśacarita* which is practically a panegyric in favour of Harṣa. Bāna's narration is always excellent, but his descriptions generally mar the beauty of the narrative.

The *Harśacarita* is usually cited as a model of an Ākhyāyikā. It is divided into eight Ucchvāsas. In the first two and a half chapters Bāna traces his descent from Dadhīca and Sarasvatī and names his immediate ancestors with veneration for their piety and learning. His mother Rājyadevī died even when he was a child, while his father died when he was fourteen years. He next tells us of his pursuits and comrades and how he was invited by Harṣa to visit his court. Here begins the story of Harṣa, the main events there-of being the death of Prabhākaravardhana (the father of Harṣa)—the murder of Rājyavardhana (Harṣa's elder brother) when he was engaged in an expedition against the Mālva king who had slain Grahavarman (the husband of his sister Rājyasrī) and who had carried her away to his capital,—Harṣa's march on Mālva

to avenge the disgrace, — Rājyasrī's escape from Mālva, — her being rescued by a Buddhist ascetic when she was about to burn herself in despair, — and Harsa's meeting Rājyasrī. The last Ucchvāsa of the work has five very long descriptions. It ends with the description of the night-fall and is obviously incomplete.

Harsacarita is the only historical kāvya in prose. All the later works of this class are in pure and simple poetry with the exception of Vemabhūpālacarita which, in every respect, is an imitation of the Harsacarita.

### VĀKPATIRĀJA's GAUDAVAHO (8th cent.)

The Gaudavaho of VĀKPATIRĀJA was written to celebrate the defeat of a Gauda prince by king Yasovarman of Kanooj, the poet's patron. This is a poem in Mahārāstrī Prākṛt. King Yasovarman was overthrown and killed, not much later, in about 740 A.D. It is because of this, perhaps, that the work 'contains as little history as possible, but expatiates instead in the wonted kāvya manner in descriptions of scenery and the seasons, and of the amusements of kings, and does not scruple to relate myths.' The poem was, in all likelihood, left unfinished after the king's death. So, the date of the poem may be about 740 A.D.

The poem contains vivid pictures of village life and a graphic description of a temple of Kāli. The poet was a contemporary of Bhavabhūti and has acknowledged his indebtedness to him.

### PADMAGUPTA's NAVASĀHASĀNKACARITA (11th cent.)

The Navasāhasāṅkacarita of PADMAGUPTA or PARIMALA is another historical kāvya in 18 cantos.

It only alludes to the history of Sindhurāja Navasāhasāṅka of Mālva, the poet's patron, and as such, its historical value is almost negligible. The theme of the winning of the princess S'asiprabhā which it relates is almost mythical. The poet has imitated Kālidāsa's style in this kāvya and is hence known generally as Parimala Kālidāsa.

Padmagupta was the son of Mṛgāṅkagupta. He was the protege of the kings of Dhārā, viz., Vākpatirāja and Sindhurāja. It was at the direction of Sindhurāja that the poet wrote his kāvya in about 1005 A.D.

### BILHAÑA'S VIKRAMĀṄKADEVACARITAM (11th cent.)

The Vikramāṅkadevacaritam is an epic in 17 cantos, composed in honour of king Cālukya Vikramāditya VI of Kalyān (1076-1127 A.D.) by Bilhañā in gratitude for the very many gifts bestowed on him by the king. The work supplies some valuable information about the dynasty of the king. It must have been composed before 1088 A.D., as it does not record the great expedition of that king to the south which took place in that year.

Bilhana was born in Kashmir. He wandered far and wide and stayed with several princes until he was received as Vidyāpati by the Cālukya king Vikramāditya VI. Bilhañā has written two other works, viz., the CAURAPĀṄCĀŚIKĀ, a lyric and KARṄASUNDARĪ, a drama. His language is simple and charming with few compounds. His descriptions are graphic and his narration is interesting. The historical material is not much in his Vikramāṅkadevacarita which indulges in descriptions of

various items and things of poetic interest, having been designed after the epic model. The supernatural is introduced freely to interfere with the affairs of the hero and hence the work cannot be taken as recording anything accurately.

The *Vikramāṅkadevacarita* begins with an imperfect sketch of the Cālukyan dynasty of the hero and then gives an account of how the hero ascended the throne in lieu of his elder brother Somesvara, how he had to fight also with his own younger brother Jayasimha, and how the Cholas had to be suppressed. As the work is after the epic model, cantos 7-13 are devoted to the description in the usual manner, of the svayamvara of Candra-lekhā (daughter of a Silhāra prince of Karahāta), Vikrama's marriage with her and the conjugal delights of the wedded couple. The last canto is devoted to an account of the poet himself and his family, the kings of the land, and of his experiences.

### KALHAÑA's RĀJATARANGINI (12th cent.)

Rājatarangiṇī is a great work in as much as it makes a bold attempt at giving a complete history of Kashmir. The work is by KALHAÑA, a poet of Kashmir and the greatest historian who wrote in Sanskrit with a wholly historical out-look. As recorded by the poet himself, his father Campaka was the minister of king Harṣa of Kashmir (1089-1101 A.D.). After the fall of Harṣa, Jayasimha became king and ruled from 1127 to 1159 A.D. Kalhana seems not to have enjoyed royal favour. In his Rājatarangiṇī he traces the history of Kashmir with an unbiassed mind, from the period of Asoka down to his own times. As far as the early

part of the work is concerned, we can clearly see that he has been influenced by the *Nilamatapurāṇa* which is considered as containing the traditional account of the early history of Kashmir.

Kalhana himself tells us that his *Rājatarāṅginī* is based upon eleven collections of *Rājakathās* and the *Nilamatapurāṇa* of Nilamuni; and that he has verified the traditional dates by referring to grants and inscriptions. The work consists of 8 books, the last of which mentions Jayasimha as the ruling sovereign. Kalhana began his work in 1149 A.D. and completed it in about a year. The work, besides being a chronicle, is a *mahākāvya* in every sense of the term, with the *Sānta-rasa* as the prevailing sentiment. Pessimism is predominant in the work, and there is also a vein of satire throughout. Kalhana's motive in writing this history of kings seems to have been mainly to illustrate the 'vanity of everything save resignation.' He believed in the doctrine of fate; fate is the only sensible explanation of life according to him.

Kalhana's history of the kings of Kashmir was continued from king Jayasimha up to his own time i.e., 1467 A.D., by Jonarāja and there-after up to 1486 by S'rivara, a pupil of Jonarāja.

Kalhana was a great devotee of S'iva. His *ARDHANĀRĪS'VARASTOTRA* is a fine devotional lyric.

### MINOR HISTORICAL KĀVYAS

The *DvYĀŚRAYAKĀVYĀ* or *KUMĀRAPĀLACARITA* of Hemacandra contains 20 cantos in Sanskrit and 8 cantos in *Prākṛt* and gives an account of Kumārapāla of Anhilvad and his ancestors. Hemacandra

was a Jain monk and enjoyed the patronage of Kumārapāla. Neither historically nor poetically is the work of any significant value, as the author has through-out attempted to illustrate the intricate rules of grammar on the model of Bhatti. He lived from 1088 to 1172 A.D.

THE SOMAPĀLAVILĀSA dealing with the history of Somapāla of Rājapuri near Kashmir is by Jalaḥāna, written by him about the year 1150 A.D.

PRTHVĪRĀJAVIJAYA by Candrakavi, a contemporary of Prithvirāj of Ajmer, is a work describing the victory of Prithvirāj over Sultan Shihabuddin Ghori in 1191 A.D. The work, as it is discovered, is incomplete. It mentions the name of Bhāsa and is commented upon by Jonarāja (c. 1448) of Kashmir.

THE HAMMĪRA-MAHĀKĀVYĀ, in 14 cantos, is by Nayacandra. It is supposed to have been written in the year 1310 A.D. It relates how the Chohan king Hammīra died in a brave battle fought by him with Allaudin whose displeasure he had incurred by giving shelter to his enemies.

THE MATHURĀ-vIJAYA or VĪRA-KAMPARĀYA-CARITA dealing with the exploits of Kampana, the son of Bukka I of Vijayanagar, is by the royal poetess Gaṅgādevi the wife of Kampana. This work belongs to the latter half of the 14th century and is named after Kampana's conquest of Mathurā in the south. (See also p. 94).

THE VEMABHŪPĀLACARITA, also called VĪRA-NĀRĀYAṄACARITA, is a fine prose work in glorification of the life and exploits of Vemabbūpāla or

Viranārāyaṇa, a Reddi ruler of Addanki during 1403 to 1420 A.D. The author of this work is Vāmana Bhatta Bāṇa (already noticed in pp. 94-5) who enjoyed the patronage of the above said king. This work abounds in many passages of considerable merit.

THE VARADĀMBIKĀ-PARIṄAYA is a Campū work by the royal poetess Tirumalāmbā who wrote in 1550 A.D. describing the marriage of a princess named Varadāmbikā with her own husband Acyutarāya.

Another work of considerable merit is RAGHUNĀTHĀBHΥUDAYA by yet another royal poetess Rāmabhadrāmbā. In this kāvya of 12 cantos she describes at great length the history of her own husband Raghuvātha.

## CHAPTER V

## GADYA KĀVYA — PROSE ROMANCE

We have already seen how, in the case of Sanskrit Padya-kāvya, only the perfect productions of Kālidāsa could come down to our times while all the earlier works almost entirely perished. What happened to Padya-kāvya could not but happen to Gadya-kāvya also. Works of Dāndin, Subandhu and Bāna are, in fact, the earliest and the most finished specimens of Prose romance available to us. These works mark a definitely advanced stage in the history of Sanskrit prose which, like any literature, must have had a gradual growth towards perfection. Earlier works perished, being eclipsed obviously by the glory of the later masters of prose writings.

For the earliest specimen available of prose in India we should go back to about 800 B.C., when the Yajurveda and the first theological treatises known as Brāhmaṇas were composed. These works quote mantras, i.e., old verses freely, but they may yet be regarded as prose works in their general character. Their style has some defects due mainly to the nature of their subject matter, but it has also its own merits, such as simplicity and directness. In the next or Sūtra period which begins about 500 B.C., prose works of a somewhat different kind seem to have been introduced; but of these only one has been preserved to us, that is, the NIRUKTA of Yāska. This is concerned with the explanation of the Veda. Yāska's style retains all the good features of the style of the Brāhmaṇas

without any trace of its defects. If this growth of prose style had gone on uninterrupted, it would have resulted in the course of a short time, in a splendid, simple and dignified prose literature comparable to any of its kind. But this was not to be; for, the peculiar circumstances of that age put a stop to this very desirable growth. In the last few centuries before Christ, the intellectual activity in northern India was so great and the departments of learning cultivated were so many that scholars and teachers found it necessary to invent a new style of composition known as the Sūtra style which is unrivalled in its brevity. However useful, this mode of composition was, from other stand points, fatal to the growth of literary prose. All the same, prose was preferred to verse by eminent commentators on the Sūtra works. For instance, Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya*, which is a commentary on the Sūtras of Pāṇini, is in simple and beautiful prose. The commentaries on the *Vedānta Sūtras* by Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja, and Madhva are again in prose. As a matter of fact, all commentaries on the several standard works in the different branches of Sanskrit literature have been uniformly in prose.

Literary prose also must have been popular even in early times; for, Patañjali of the 2nd cent. B.C. mentions (in his *Mahābhāṣya*) Vāsavadatta, Sumanottara and Bhaimarathi as examples of Ākhyāyikās. Bāna himself refers, in his *Harsacarita*, to Bhāttāra Haricandra as an author of a prose composition of high merit. Considering all these facts on parallel lines with the poetic kāvya, we may conclude that these are more than enough evidences to show that, during the long period up

to Dāṇḍin in the history of Sanskrit literature, the prose of romance was being gradually evolved under the influence of the poetic kāvya and that it gave rise to 'three kinds of prose works viz., 1. Prose romances, 2. Popular tales and 3. Didactic fables. Of these three, the prose romances are the sole representatives of artistic prose in classical Sanskrit and their number is not large. They were in the first instance the result of the application of the literary method to popular tales. They are characterised by a novel feature in that they are related by the parties themselves. This introduces an involved style there being no indirect form of speech in Sanskrit. Besides this, one story is

1. Later Sanskrit rhetoricians divide Gadya-kāvya into two classes viz., KATHĀ and ĀKHYĀYIKĀ. But the Agnipurāṇa has five classifications, viz., 1) ĀKHYĀYIKĀ 2) KATHĀ 3) KHAṄDA-KATHĀ 4) PARI-KATHĀ and 5) KATHĀṄIKĀ, the last three where-of are only different forms of the Kathā. The definition of Kathā and Ākhyāyikā as given in the Agnipurāṇa is as follows—

कर्तुं वंशप्रशंसा स्याद्यत् गच्छेन विस्तरात् । कन्याहरणसंग्रामविप्रलभविपत्तयः ॥  
 भवन्ति यत्र दीप्ताश्च रीतिवृत्तिप्रवृत्तयः ।  
 उच्छृत्वासैश्च परिच्छेदो यत्र सा चूर्णिकोत्तरा ॥  
 वक्त्रं चापरवक्त्रं वा यत्र सत्याख्यायिका मता ॥  
 श्लोकः स्ववंशं संक्षेपात्कविर्यत्र प्रशंसति ।  
 मुख्यार्थस्याविताराय भवेद्यत् कथान्तरम् ॥  
 परिच्छेदो न यत्र स्याद्वेदा लभकैः क्वचिन् । सा कथा..... ॥

The definition given by the Alāṅkārasaṅgraha is कथा कल्पितवृत्तान्ता, सत्यार्थाख्यायिका मता ॥ According to Dāṇḍin this distinction has not much significance. (See his Kāvyaḍars'a, i 23-30).

found inside another making the whole a complicated structure and often we miss the thread of the main story in the intricacies of the subordinate ones. In the earlier stages the structure as well as the style of these kathās as they are called was comparatively simple, as for example in the Pañca-tantra, Hitopades'a and Bhetāla-pañcavims'ati which are all of a popular character as indicated by their subject matter and also from the many queer idioms which they contain. The simplicity of these works gradually gave place to a complex treatment of the subject in an extremely intricate style. In their general features they resemble the court epics and are composed in a diction richly embellished with poetic figures. Only they are not in verse. Poetic quality of ओङ्स्, i.e., समासभूयस्त्वम् is regarded as the special mark of excellence in these compositions. Though not in the form of verse, their style is rhythmic (बृत्तान्विध). As to their subject matter they contain very little action. They consist largely of picturesque scenes strung together by a thin narrative. They contain lengthy descriptions full of long compounds, often associated with puns to an annoying extent. In spite of all this, they contain many really poetic thoughts. It is significant that Kālidāsa who tops the list in drama, lyric and epic does not appear as a prose writer. The only prose he has written is to be found in the dramas and there he shows his usual excellence.

### DANDIN'S DAS'AKUMĀRACARITA (6th, 7th cent.?)

The Das'akumāracarita, which is the story of ten Kumāras as the very name suggests, is a fine

prose work by Dāṇḍin. The work is a Kathā—a romance (कल्पितवृत्तान्त) according to the Alāṅkāra-saṅgraha. It is in three sections—the Pūrvapīthikā (5 Ucchvāsas), the Dasākumāracarita proper (8 Ucchvāsas), and the Uttarapīthikā (1 Ucchvāsa). A close study of the whole work reveals the following points—

1. The styles of the three sections are different from each other.

2. The story of the second section, i.e., Dasākumāracarita proper, begins and ends rather abruptly.

3. More than one Uttara and Pūrva pīthikās are available (from different pens) to fit in at the end and beginning of the main story.

4. There is not complete agreement between the statements made in the Pīthikās and the story proper.

These have led scholars to believe that though Dāṇḍin might have written the complete story, in course of time, the beginning and end of it must have been lost somehow; and Dāṇḍin's admirers or disciples who knew the story must have written the missing parts of the work in their own words and added them on to the main work in order to make it complete. If this view is accepted, only the 8 Ucchvāsas of the second section (Dasākumāracarita proper) are to be regarded as Dāṇḍin's composition.

Nothing definite about the life of Dāṇḍin can be said. We can gather very little about him from his works. A close study of the Dasākumāracarita reveals that he must have been a South Indian, well read in the Kāmasūtra of Vātsyāyana and

Arthasāstra of Kautilya, and intimate with the ways and manners of the wealthy and particularly the members of the royal families. Prof. Wilson remarks—‘The very name of the author suggests an uncertainty,’ as DANDIN properly designates a STAFF-BEARER, — a Sanyāsin. But, proceeding further, he concludes with the observation that Dandin or rather SŪRĪ DANDIN is ordinarily regarded as a proper name.

It is generally believed that Vāmana's date is the latter half of the eighth cent. and that Dandin was his predecessor. In his Kāvyādars'a, Dandin has referred to the Prākṛt work Setubandha of king Pravarasena who flourished in the 5th cent. These fix up the two limits of the date of Dandin as the 5th cent. and the 8th cent. A.D. Now the simplicity of the style of Dandin makes anyone think that he must have preceded both Bāna and Subandhu of the 7th cent. Thus Dandin will have to be assigned to the 6th cent A.D. But if the KATHĀ-SĀRA referred to hereafter, is a genuine work of Dandin, as, according to it, Dāmodara went to the court of Simhavarman, the Pallava king at Kanchi, at his invitation, where he lived thenceforth, Dandin, Dāmodara's great-grandson, lived about the close of the 7th cent., the date of the Pallava king referred to being taken as the early part of that century. Prof. Keith places him before 700 A.D. on the ground that his Kāvyādars'a is definitely before Bhāmaha.

The Das'akumāracarita is the oldest of the extant romances of a literary type. It presents to us a vivid though exaggerated picture of low class city life. The work remains unsurpassed for its

(padalālitya) fluidity of sound and musical style. We may note here that the 7th chapter of the main text is written without the use of even a single labial sound.

Dandin is believed to have written two other works, viz., 1. KĀVYĀDARS'A (a treatise on Poetics) and 2. AVANTISUNDARĪKATHĀ. But some scholars think that Dandin, the author of the Das'akumāracarita, is not, the same as the author of the Kāvyādars'a.

### THE AVANTISUNDARĪKATHĀ & KATHĀSĀRA

The Avantisundarikathā was first published in 1924 and ascribed to Dandin. As its very name indicates, it is a romance. It is in a fragmentary state, but is accompanied by a metrical KATHĀSĀRA which gives the name of the poet as Dandin along with plenty of information about him and his predecessors.

According to this account Dandin is the great grandson of Bhāravi, the author of the Kirātārjuniya. He wrote the Avantisundarikathā during his stay in the court of the Pallava king Narasimhavarman after he had re-established himself at Kanchi. The story of the Avantisundarikathā is identical with that of the Pūrvapīthikā of the Das'akumāracarita. Some critics feel that the same story would not be repeated by one and the same writer in two different works and on that ground hold that the latter work must be assigned to a different writer of the 7th cent. A.D.

### BĀNA'S KĀDAMBARĪ (7th cent.)

Kādambarī is a romantic tale by Bāna. The story is a complex one dealing with the lives of two

heroes each of whom is born twice on the earth. The author's skill in construction is shown by the fact that each of the minor stories is essential to the development of the plot, and it is not till quite the end that we see that Sūdraka himself the hearer of the story is the hero Candrāpīda and that his hearing it is necessary to re-awaken his love for Kādambarī. The same story is told in the Kathā-saritsāgara of Somadeva; but it differs from Bāna's in some respects. The main difference is in the persons affected by the curse and here the artistic superiority of Bāna is shown in his not attaching any degrading forms of work to Kādambarī or her parents who are all made more than mortals. It appears possible that both the stories are based on a common original now lost, which may be the Br̥hatkathā of Gunādhya. Bāna's tale shows greater refinement and in his hands it becomes a story of human sorrow and divine consolation, of death and of yearning for union after death.

Bāna died leaving the Kādambarī unfinished and his son Bhūṣaṇa Bhatta Bāna (also called Pulinda) has completed it, who says in the preface

याते दिवं पितरि तद्वच्चसैव साध्य  
विच्छेदमाप्य भुवि यस्तु कथाप्रबन्धः ।  
दुःखं सतां तदसमाप्तिकृतं विलोक्य  
प्रारब्धं एष च मया न कवित्वदर्पात् ॥

Subandhu, the author of Vāsavadatta, seems to have influenced Bāna considerably, although Bāna surpasses him in every way. Among Pandits Bāna's work has for many centuries past, been a model for style. It is therefore worthwhile considering briefly the characteristics of his style.

The great fault of Bāṇa's style is its diffuseness arising from a diction of inexhaustible opulence always swelling and generally overflowing its banks. The first thing that strikes a reader is that the sense of proportion, the very foundation of style, is absent. From the descriptive parts of his works he digresses frequently and economy of epithet is what Bāṇa never knew. No topic is let go till it is exhausted. Every possible detail is mentioned; and then follows a series of puns involving intricate s̠lesas. The chief alaṅkāras that mark his style in the descriptive portions are Anuprāsa, Śliṣṭopamā, Mālotpreksā, Mālāparisaṅkhyā, Mālopamā, Ras'anopamā and Virodbhābhāsa. These defects, it must be said, spring from the author's richness of resource, readiness of wit and exuberance of fancy. Though his style in the descriptive parts exhibits some objectionable features, it is excellent and almost without a flaw in the more narrative portions. Here Bāṇa seems to have stepped aside from himself and his language becomes unaffected and delightful. In fact, Bāṇa has to be relieved of much of his poetic baggage to be properly appreciated. The love of what is beautiful and pure both in character and the world around, tenderness of heart and gentle spirit troubled by the disquieted life are all found in abundance in him.

The other prose work of Bāṇa, namely, the HARSACARITA, has already been noticed under 'Historical Kāvya.' We may recall here that Bāṇa's date is known with definiteness, as he himself states in his Harsacarita that he was the court poet of Harṣavardhana (604-648 A.D.).

Two devotional lyrics CĀNDĪSTAKA and S'IVASTAKA, and MUKUTATĀDITAKA, the nature of which is not known as it is lost, are the other works attributed to Bāna's authorship.

**SUBANDHU'S VĀSAVADATTA (7th cent.)**

Vāsavadatta is by Subandhu. Bāna refers to this work in his Harṣacarita. It is therefore evident that Subandhu, the author of Vāsavadatta, is earlier than Bāna. But there is a difficulty in accepting the view. For Subandhu himself alludes to Udyotakara, (6th cent. A.D.) and to a Buddhist writer on logic, Dharmakirti, who lived in the early half of the 7th cent. A.D. Bāna's date is also definitely known as the first half of the 7th cent. How then could Subandhu be earlier than Bāna? So some scholars hold that the 'Vāsavadatta' mentioned by Bāna in his Harṣacarita is not Subandhu's work but a more ancient work of the name to which Patañjali has referred in his Mahābhāṣya. These scholars cite some phrases and passages of Subandhu and show that they must have been borrowed from Bāna and Bhavabhūti, to strengthen their view point. According to these scholars Subandhu has to be assigned to the second half of the 8th cent. A.D.

The Vāsavadatta is a kathā. Its story is quite different from the story of Vāsavadattā, the heroine of that name, figuring in the popular Udayana legends. The present work is about the marriage of Vāsavadattā and Kandarpaketu who first dream about each other's beauty and later on meet with great difficulty, and elope together with the help of a magic seed.

The style of Subandhu, if anything, is worse than Bāna's at its worst. The only consolation is that Subandhu's work is not as big as either of Bāna's works. He writes in a style which seems to erect a barrier between himself and the reader. The beauties of his poetry are disfigured owing to wilful complications of his time. The details are so many that the interests in the story as such vanish. On the whole the style is to be condemned as highly artificial.

#### DHANAPĀLA's TILAKAMANJARI (10th cent.)

The Tilakamañjari was written by DHANAPĀLA about the year 973 A.D. It describes the love of a princess named Tilaikā for Samaraketu who also was a prince. The theme is taken from a Jain legend. The whole work is just an imitation of Bāna's Kādambarī.

Dhanapāla mentions that his father was an eminent scholar named Sarvadeva and that his patron was king Muñja of Dhārā. He also refers to Vālmīki, Vyāsa, Pravarasena, Kālidāsa, Bāna, Māgha, Bhāravi, Bhavākhūti, Vākpatirāja and Rājasēkhara along with some other ancient poets in the prefatory portion of the work and mentions the names of two works, viz., the Brhatkathā and Tarāngavati.

#### SODDHALA's UDAYASUNDARIKATHĀ (11th cent.)

The Udayasundari kathā is a romantic tale in 8 Ucchvāsas describing the events that led to the marriage of Udayasundari, a Nāga princess, with Malayavāhana, king of Pratisthāna. It is by SODDHALA who was honoured by Vatsarāja, the

Cālukya king of Lāta, during whose reign (1026-1080 A.D.) the Udayasundari-kathā must have been written. The first chapter of the kathā describes the poet's geneology and the occasion for his composition.

### ODEYADEVA's GADYACINTĀMANI (12th cent.)

Gadyacintāmani describes the life of Jīvandhara, a prince who became an ascetic. It is a work in 11 lambakas by ODEYADEVA who had the title Vādibhasimba and wrote about 1200 A.D. It describes the life of king Satyadhara and his son Jivandhara who in the end seeks peace in asceticism. The work contains an advice to Jivandhara which is on the model of the S'ukanāsopades'a in Bāna's Kādambarī.

### MINOR PROSE WORKS (14th to 17th cent.)

KṛṣṇACARITA was written about 1320 A.D. by AGASTYA, the author of the Bālabhārata. The VEMABHŪPĀLAGARITA of VĀMANA BHATTA BĀNA (15th cent. A.D.) has been noticed already under 'Historical Kāvya.' The MUDRĀRĀKSASA-PŪRVASAṄKATHĀNAKA is a prose rendering of the famous play Mudrārāksasa. It was written by ANANTAS'ARMAN (17th cent. A.D.). All these prose writers have invariably imitated Bāna in style. There has been no trace of originality in any of them.

## CHAPTER VI

## THE POPULAR TALE AND DIDACTIC FABLE

Folk tales and fables have been very popular among the common people in India from very ancient times. They generally deal with human and super-human beings, beasts and ghosts, and the natural and super-natural happenings to them in the past and the present, on the earth here and in regions beneath or above this earth. They are just the direct outcome of the inventing power and the imagination of the story-tellers.

These tales may be brought under two divisions, viz., the popular tales and didactic fables. In form, perhaps both were similar in the beginning, although their purposes must have been different. The term *kathā* applied loosely to all these indicates that they must have been in prose. The popular tale with its thrilling episodes served the purpose of delightment, while the didactic fable, as its very name indicates, was to impart instruction in practical wisdom and moral codes. The story was given importance in the former and didactic matter in the latter. So, during the growth of this literature, the didactic fable drew much from the Epics and *Smṛtis* and quoted full verses from them. The popular tale, however, remained unaffected for a long time, until it drew the attention of the religious minded Buddhists and Jains and was adopted by them for presenting their doctrines through them. But for this, the popular tales of India would have developed as such considerably and there would have been a very rich department

of that literature also in Sanskrit. The popular tale, we may assume, was in Prākṛt originally, as it had to appeal to the common people and the Brāhatkathā of Guṇādhya is believed to have been in the Piasācī dialect. The didactic fables must have been in Sanskrit from the beginning, as their main object was to impart ethical instructions to the people. The frame-work of these tales is peculiar in as much as several narratives are involved as sub-stories in a main theme. This peculiar style of the Indian fables was borrowed by others and the well known Arabian Nights may be cited here as an instance. While the popular tale took the form of religious tale in later times, the didactic fable gradually shook off its frame-work of fable and put on the form of mere didactic poetry. This accounts for there being no independent fable worth the name after the Pañcatantra.

### THE POPULAR TALE

#### GUΝĀDHYA's BRĀHATKATHĀ (1st cent. A.D.)

The Brāhatkathā of Guṇādhya is known to have been the earliest popular tale as such. The work is lost to us. But there are references to it by later writers such as Subandhu, Bāṇa, Dandin, etc. Kālidāsa and Bhāsa have used or alluded to the Udayana-kathā in their works. Somadeva mentions as the patron of Guṇādhya one Sātavāhana of the Āndhrabhrtya dynasty. These tend to show that the Brāhatkathā must have been written earlier than 1st cent. A.D. Three different adapted forms in verse of the Brāhatkathā, written between the 9th and 11th cent. A.D., are however available.

These are 1) the Br̥hatkathā-s'loka-saṅgraha by Budhasvāmin (9th cent.) 2) the Kathāsaritsāgara by Somadeva (1070 A.D.) and 3) the Br̥hatkathā-mañjari by Kṣemendra (1037 A.D.). The first of these is a Nepalese account while the latter two are Kashmirian. All the three are in Sanskrit, while the original Br̥hatkathā is mentioned to have been written in the 'Paisācī dialect — a kind of Prākṛt originally in use in the region of the Vindhya-s which is adjacent to Pratisthāna on the Godāvari, where Guṇādhyā is said to have lived. The Br̥hatkathā has been much admired by later writers and used as a source book for their writings. Thus Govardhana is right in placing Guṇādhyā on a level with Vālmiki and Vyāsa.

There are several stories about the origin of the Br̥hatkathā. The one narrated by Somadeva in his Kathāsaritsāgara is briefly as follows—

Stories about the seven Vidyādhara emperors were once being told by Siva to Pārvatī, which were overheard by an attendant named Puṣpadanta and later related by him to his wife Jayā who was Pārvatī's servant. Jayā narrated the stories to her friends. In course of time, Pārvatī came to know of this and cursed Puṣpadanta to be born a mortal. As his brother Mālyavān intervened in the matter, he was also cursed similarly. But a limit was set for the curse at the entreaties of Jayā. According to that, Puṣpadanta would be liberated from his mortal form when he related the stories he had overheard to a goblin named Kāñabhūti

1. Daṇḍin in his Kavyādars'a I 38 says—‘भूतमाषामयी प्राहुरद्दुष्टार्थी बृहत्कथाम् ।’

in the Vindhya forest, while Mālyavān had to hear all those tales from Kānabhūti and spread them on the earth to secure his liberation. Thus Puṣpadanta was born as Vararuci (the grammarian and) the minister of the last of the Nandas. After retirement from service he went to the Vindhya forest, met Kānabhūti, related to him the stories of the seven Vidyādharas and regained his celestial place. Mālyavān was born as Guṇādhyā and served Sātavāhana at Pratisthāna as his minister. In a dispute with a rival of his about the teaching of Sanskrit to the king, Guṇādhyā took a vow that he will not use Sanskrit for literary purposes and quitted the service of the king. He then went to the Vindhya forest which was nearby, met Kānabhūti, heard from him all the tales of the Vidyādharas and wrote them down in the language of the goblins. The work was shown to the king by Guṇādhyā's pupils, but, as he discarded it, Guṇādhyā threw the stories one after another to fire. The entreaties of his pupils could only prevent him from throwing the last story. The story thus preserved is the Brāhatkathā.

The main theme of the Brāhatkathā is about the adventures of Naravāhanadatta, son of Udayana of Kausāmbī. During his adventures together with his friend Gomukha, Naravāhana marries a Vidyādharā princess named Madanamañjūsikā. But one Mānasavega kidnaps her. Naravāhanadatta, aided by Gomukha, searches for her, recovers her and finally becomes the emperor of the Vidyādharas. Though the main theme is simple, the whole narrative is much complicated with the introduction of several sub-stories.

We will now briefly deal with the three available abridged versions of the *Bṛhatkathā*.

THE *Bṛhatkathā-S'loka-saṅgraha* is by *BUDHASVĀMIN* who is considered to have lived in the 9th cent. A.D. As the manuscript of this work was discovered (in 1893) in Nepal, it is regarded as the Nepalese version of the *Bṛhatkathā*. The work, in its present existing form, is only a fragment consisting of 28 cantos covering 4539 verses. Judging from the material the fragment covers, scholars believe that the entire work should have contained 25000 verses. This version is considered as nearer the original in view of the frequent occurrence of *Prākṛt* forms and absence of elaborate descriptions. Some scholars even go to the extent of holding that *Somadeva* and *Kṣemendra* must have based their works on this *S'lokasaṅgraha*.

*Bṛhatkathā-mañjari* is another abridgement of the *Bṛhatkathā* of *Guṇādhya*. It is by the Kashmirian poet *Kṣemendra* and contains 7500 verses divided into 18 lambakas. Like the poet's two other *mañjarīs*, viz. the *Rāmāyanamañjari* and the *Bhāratamañjari*, this work also suffers too much of a condensation. The narrative, therefore, is neither clear nor effective. *Kṣemendra*'s *mañjari* varies from the *S'lokasaṅgraha* of *Budhasvāmin* in its contents. For instance, the *mañjari* includes the tale of *Vikrama* and the Vampire which is not found in the *S'lokasaṅgraha*.

*Kṣemendra* was a polymoth. He was the court poet of king *Ananta* of Kashmir (1029-1064 A.D.) His other works have been noticed in the relevant sections of this book.

THE KATHĀSARITSĀGARA is the third available abridgement of the Br̥hatkathā. This is by another Kasmerian poet SOMADEVA, prepared about 1070 A.D. The work is divided into 18 lambakas like the Mañjari. It is further sub-divided into 124 tarāngas to maintain the metaphor of the main title Kathā-sarit-sāgara. There are 24000 stanzas in the work. This version also, like Kṣemendra's, contains several extra sub-stories which are not found in the Nepalese S̄lokasaṅgraha. It, moreover, alludes directly to the Buddhist Birth Stories. The circumstances that led to the writing of Br̥hatkathā which are narrated in the Kathāsaritsāgara have been noticed by us already. The Kathāsaritsāgara II says that what remained after the destruction of the six stories was the Naravāhanadatta-carita in one lakh of stanzas. Somadeva narrates the story in a clear and interesting manner. His style is simple and sweet and is far superior to that of Kṣemendra.

### THE AVADĀNAS (1st cent. A.D.?)

The term Avadāna in Buddhist literature means 'the heroic deed.' So, the Avadānas are tales intended to show how the heroic deeds in an earlier birth of an illustrious person shaped his life in a later birth. These tales illustrate effectively the doctrine of Karma and re-incarnation. Three different Books dealing with such Avadānas are noteworthy.

1. THE AVADĀNA-SĀTAKA is a collection of 100 old tales of Avadāna. Its author is not known. As this work was translated into Chinese in the middle of the 3rd cent. A.D., the original is

supposed to have been written in the 1st cent. A.D. The work is in Sanskrit prose interspersed with some verses in both Sanskrit and Prākṛt.

2. THE DIVYĀVADĀNA is another collection of the Avadāna tales and is similar to the above S'ataka in all respects. This work also must have been produced in the 1st century A.D., as the translation into Chinese of one of its tales was made in 265 A.D.

3. THE AVADĀNAKALPALATĀ is a very late work by KṣEMENDRA (1050 A.D.). It contains 107 tales, some of which are found in the above noticed Avadānas'atka.

### BIRTH STORIES OF THE BUDDHA

In addition to the Avadāna stories there were plenty of other stories popular among the Buddhists from early times. The chief of them were about Buddha in his several earlier births. They show in a picturesque manner how various qualities which are extraordinarily perfect go to make the Buddha. Such tales, it is believed, numbered at least five hundred.

THE JĀTAKAMĀLĀ, containing the chief among the birth stories of Buddha, is by ĀRYASŪRA. It is written, like the Avadānas, in prose interspersed with verses. A Chinese translation of this work was made in 434 A.D. Therefore the Jātakamālā, its original, must be assigned to an earlier period. Many scholars hold that it must be a work of the 3rd cent. A.D. These Jātaka tales have supplied themes to many later Buddhist authors for literary compositions of different kinds.

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Bhoja's relationship with the numerous poets that thronged his court and the various literary diversions he had in their company. Almost every account contained in this work is full of wit and humour. The Samasyā-pūrāṇas described in it are highly amusing.

There are other works also of this very name by MERUTUṄGA, RĀJAVALLABHA, VATSARĀJA, SUBHASĪLA and PADMAGUPTA. But these are not very popular and many of them are yet in the form of manuscripts.

### MINOR POPULAR TALES

THE BHARATAKA-DVĀTRIMSĀKA is a collection of 32 stories of the ridiculous Bharatakas who were S'aiva mendicants. The work is of an unknown date and authorship and is probably the outcome of Jaina inspiration. Its passages are throughout interspersed with vernacular verses.

THE PURUŚAPARĪKSĀ of VIDYĀPATI contains 44 tales illustrative of manly qualities told in a graceful simple style.

THE KATHĀRATNĀKARA of HEMAVIJAYA-GANI (17th cent.) contains 258 short tales of a miscellaneous type dealing mostly with fools, rogues, and artful women.

THE JAINA-KATHĀNAKAS are vast in number. They invariably have a moral tag attached to them.

THE KATHĀRNAVA by S'IVADĀSA, author of the VETĀLAPĀṄCĀVIMSATIKA, contains thirtyfive tales.

THE KATHĀKAUTUKA (1451 A.D.) by S'RĪ VĪRAKAVI, pupil of Jonarāja, is in verse and tells the story of Yusuf and Zuleika in 15 chapters.

## THE DIDACTIC FABLE

## PANCATANTRA (3rd cent. A.D.)

The Pañcatantra is the most important and interesting work in the branch of didactic fable in Indian literature. It is so called because it is divided into five books each setting forth one particular TANTRA or rule of political conduct. The whole work consists of plenty of fables written in prose interspersed with a number of illustrative and pithy verses. The prefatory chapter of the work mentions that it was written by one VISNU-SARMA to train the idle and stupid sons of king Amaras'akti of Mahilāropya (in the Deccan) in political and moral science and to make them surpass all others in practical wisdom. The identity of neither Visnus'arma nor Amaras'akti has been determined. The work was translated into Pehlevi at the order of king Khosru Anushirvan (531-75) by a Persian physician named Burzoe. Both the Pehlevi translation and the Sanskrit original are lost and what we have now is an old Syrian version made by Bud in 570 A.D. and an Arabic version made by Abdallah Ibna Mogaffa about 750 A.D. This Arabic version was the basis for the later ones in the several European languages, e.g., the Greek in 1080 A.D., the Hebrew in 1100 A.D., the Latin in 1270 A.D., the German in 1480 A.D., the Italian in 1552 and the French in 1678 A.D. It is said that the circulation Pañcatantra has in the world is next only to the Bible in extent. Hertel records more than two hundred versions of this collection of fables in about fifty different languages of the world.

The date of the composition of the *Pañcatantra* must have been earlier than 570 A.D., the date of the Syrian rendering of the Pehlevi version. Allowing a fair margin of time to merit such a translation into a foreign language, the original is generally held to have been written in the 3rd cent. A.D. This date is quite arbitrary on the face of it. The place of its origin is held by some as Kashmir and by some others as Magadha. Although there are traces of Buddhistic influence throughout the work, it is believed that it is not Buddhist in its origin and that its author was a Vaisnava. The name of the original text again, it has been suggested, might have been *KARATAKA* and *DAMANAKA* on the basis of the title *Kalilag* and *Damanag* for the Pehlevi version and *Kalilah* and *Damanah* for the Arabic version.

The five sections of the *Pañcatantra*, in their general outline, are—(1) *MITRABHEDA* or 'Estrangement of friends' dealing with the policy of 'divide and rule' illustrated by the story of the two jackals Karataka and Damanaka who lived happily by estranging the lion and the bull who had been very fast friends for a long time past. (2) *MITRALĀBHA* or 'Acquisition of friends' illustrates the advantages of judicious friendships with the adventures of a tortoise, a deer, a crow and a mouse. (3) *KĀKOLUKĪYA* or the 'Tale of the crows and owls' is an illustration of the danger of friendship contracted between those who are natural enemies. (4) *LABDHAPRĀNĀS'A* or 'Loss of what has been acquired' points out by means of the main story of an ape and the crocodile how certain weaknesses lead to the loss of one's own possessions. (5) The

APARĪKSITAKĀRITAM or 'Inconsiderate action' contains a number of stories illustrating how one comes to grief by failing to take all the circumstances of a case into consideration.

There are two distinct versions of the Pancatantra available now. They are — (1) The Kashmirian version called Tantrākhyāyikā in simple prose and resembling the Syrian version closely. (2) The other version is found in many forms; the most significant of them being, the one preserved in the Kathāsaritsāgara and Br̥hatkathā-mañjari. All the available versions seem to have been based on a single original Sanskrit text which is now lost. The versions of the Jain writers not only alter the stories but also add new ones of their own. There are many versions of the Pañcatantra in South India.

### HITOPADESA (10th-12th cent. A.D.)

The Hitopadesa is another very popular collection of fables similar to and chiefly based on the Pañcatantra. Twentyfive of its fortythree fables are found in the Pañcatantra. The introduction and general plan of the work is the same as of the Pañcatantra except in the number of books which is only four here as against the five there. The father of the ignorant princes is here Sudars'ana of Pātaliputra. The author of the Hitopadesa is one NĀRĀYĀNA PĀNDITA patronised by Dhavalacandra. The identity of neither of them is determined. He might have hailed from Bengal, as he refers in the work to certain Sākta practices current only in Bengal. The earliest known manuscript of it was written in 1373 A.D.

Therefore, as the work must be much earlier than that date, it is usually assigned to the period between 10th and 12th cent. A.D.

Just because the *Hitopadesa* is based on the *Pañcatantra* and incorporates some of its stories, it should not be thought that the *Hitopadesa* is an abridgement of the latter. There are many points of difference between the two. The *Hitopadesa* introduces many stories that are not found in the *Pañcatantra*. More verses are inserted between the prose narratives in the *Hitopadesa* and thus the sententious element here is more prominent than in the other work.

The four books of the *Hitopadesa* are— (1) *MITRALĀBHA*, (2) *SUHRDBHEDA*, (3) *VIGRAHA* and (4) *SANDHI*. Thus the order of the first two books of the *Pañcatantra* has been reversed here; book III of the *Pañcatantra* has been split up into two, viz., the *Sandhi* and *Vigraha* and books IV and V of the *Pañcatantra* are completely omitted here.

The style of the *Hitopadesa* is very simple and easy. It abounds in wise maxims and fine thoughts. Thus it is a very desirable book to be placed in the hands of every beginner of Sanskrit.

## CHAPTER VII

### LYRIC POETRY

Lyric poetry is that poetry which expresses the individual emotions of the poet. A special aptitude for depicting such emotions and certain specific physical conditions in a single stanza is generally seen in the Indian poets. Such little pen pictures form a prominent feature of even dramatic compositions. Some of these lyrical verses are devotional and religious extolling some special deity. Lyrics of this type can be traced to the R̄gvedic hymns which are all of a devotional character. Many passages in the Rāmāyana, Mahābhārata and even the Purānās belong to this class of lyrics. There is another distinct class of lyrics which are of an erotic character. These lyrics again are in two forms—(1) detached verses and (2) fairly long poems consisting of only such stanzas.

#### 1. THE EROTIC LYRIC

##### KĀLIDĀSA'S RTUSAMHĀRA AND MEGHASANDEŚ'A

*Rtusamhara*—The *Rtusamhāra* of KĀLIDĀSA, in which the attractive features of the six seasons are successively set forth, is an excellent specimen of a long lyric. It is composed in various metres, and in it the poet skilfully interweaves with fine descriptions of nature, the expressions of human feeling. Perhaps no other work of Kālidāsa manifests more strikingly the poet's deep sympathy of nature, his keen power of observation and his skill in depicting landscape in vivid colours.

Some people doubt whether this work is by Kālidāsa. The reason for suspicion is that there are here and there indications of feebleness both in the form of the stanzas and the sentiments that they express. This defect may be admitted, but it may be ascribed to the youthful character of the poet when he composed it. Such feebleness in the case of even great poets in the early stages of their poetic career is not unknown.

*Meghasandesa*—A still more magnificent poem of the same poet is partly descriptive and partly erotic in the *Meghasandesa* which describes in the majestic *Mandākrāntā* metre the various places and objects over which the cloud-messenger has to sail in his airy voyage. The use of the same metre throughout may at first appear to be a source of monotony but it is not so. Sudden transitions of metre would have spoilt the continuity of the mood. The first canto is a description of the path of the cloud and gives a glorious picture of Nature in India at the beginning of the rainy season. Love and piety appear alternately, in the course of this canto; but as a whole, human feeling is subordinated to nature here. The reference to love scenes in canto II is somewhat excessive but there is justification for it in the *Yakṣa*'s situation. The aim of the poet is to show us wherein lies the true test of love. Its intensity is to be judged from the behaviour of the lover, not in the presence of the beloved but rather in her absence.

In the *Sākuntalam* as well as here, the separation is the result of the curse which is perhaps the Indian way of saying that somehow love is suffering for its consequences; but the other

circumstances are quite different in the two cases. Here it is a man that is shown, there it is a woman. The Yakṣa, a semi-divine being is sent down to the world of mortals to suffer the pang of separation; but Śakuntalā, a mortal, is taken to the semi-divine hermitage of Marīca there, to purify her idea of love. These differences indicate a difference in the type of love pictured in the two works. In the one the poet tells us of love as a passion, in the other of love as a purifier.

The general excellence of the poem, its small bulk, the ease with which a single metre is handled and above all the great fame of its author account for its popularity.

There can be no doubt that Kālidāsa was inspired to write this Sandes'a by similar episodes in the Rāmāyaṇa (Sundarakānda), Rukmiṇi's message to Kṛṣṇa and the Nalopākhyāna. It is maintained by some that Kālidāsa wrote this when he was away from his wife, having been sent by his patron Vikramāditya as an ambassador to Kuntales'a.

*Influence of the Meghasandesa*—This little masterpiece has called forth a number of imitations such as the S'UKASANDES'A and VEDĀNTA-DES'IKA's HAMSA-SANDES'A. In fact the number of such imitations is so large that the SANDESĀ-KĀVYĀ has become a distinct species of lyric. The Hamsasandes'a mentioned above is a poem in 110 stanzas dealing with the message sent by Rāma to Sītā through a swan, after Hanūmān had returned from Lankā. The work depicts the deep love of Rāma for Sītā; but at the same time it is characterised by the element of devotion, as the swan is asked to offer worship at the different shrines on its way in the south.

Another kind of imitation was to compose new kāvyas incorporating one or more lines of the stanzas of the Meghasandesa into their own. This imitation has however helped the preservation of the text of the Meghasandesa. JINASENA's PĀRS'VĀBHYUDAYA (814 A.D.) in four cantos describing the life of the Jain saint Pārsvanātha and the NEMIDŪTA of VIKRAMA of unknown date are attempts of this kind and preserve 120 and 125 stanzas respectively of the Meghasandesa.

*Other lyrics ascribed to Kalidasa*—S'RNGĀRATILAKA, PUŚPABĀNAVILĀSA and the RĀKSASAKĀVYA are wrongly ascribed to Kālidāsa. The Sṛngāratilaka consists of 23 erotic stanzas presenting charming pictures of love in union and separation. The Puśpabānavilāsa, is another lyric similar to the above in 26 delightful stanzas written in an elegant and simple style. The Rāksasakāvya describes in 20 stanzas the beauty of the forest sites where a lover is roaming with his beloved.

### GHATAKARPARA KĀVYA

The Ghatakarparakāvya contains in 22 stanzas a message of a young wife sent to her lover through a cloud. The poem abounds in YAMAKAS. The author offers, in the last stanza of the kāvya, to carry water in a broken jar (GHATA-KARPARA) to any one who would excel him in the use of yamakas. This, perhaps, accounts for the name of the author and the title of the kāvya.

Tradition mentions Ghatakarpala as one of the nine gems of Vikramāditya's court, and thus he becomes a contemporary of Kālidāsa.

According to a legend, Kālidāsa is said to have defeated Ghatakarpaṇa by his work NALODAYA, in the art of using yamakas, when the latter flung a retort on him thus — एको हि दोषो गुण-सञ्चिपाते निष्प्रज्ञतीन्दोरिति यो बभाषे । नूनं न दृष्टं 'कविनापितेन दारिद्र्य-दोषो गुणराशिनाशी ॥ referring to Kumārasambhava I 3.

### HĀLA's GĀTHĀSAPTAS'ATI (1st cent. B.C.)

The Prākṛt SATTASAI or Saptas'ati of HĀLA who is also called SĀTAVĀHANA is an anthology of 700 verses dealing chiefly with the sentiment of love. Many of these verses describe Kṛṣṇa's divine love. As the verses are the compositions of several authors, they are not of uniform excellence. Some are extremely sensuous, while some depict very tender emotions. Bāna pays tribute to Hāla in his Harśacarita. So Hāla must be definitely earlier than Bāna. But as there are clear traces of later additions into the original work, Macdonell holds that the work must be assigned to about 1000 A.D. The Āndhrabhrtyas who ruled over the Mahārāstra between 218 B.C. to 78 A.D. had 'Sālīvāhana' the prākṛt form of Sātavāhana as their family name and Hāla was a king of that dynasty. Identifying the above author with this king Hāla, the work is assigned to the first century B.C. by some scholars.

### BHARTRHARI's S'RNGĀRAS'ATAKAM (7th cent. A.D.)

The S'rṅgāras'atakam is an erotic lyric of 100 detached verses describing in a graceful manner feminine charms and the workings of a lover's heart. Its author, BHARTRHARI, who has written

1. Split up कविना अपि तेन and also कवि-नापितेन (barber)

also two other Sātakas on Nīti and VAIRĀGYA, is usually identified with the grammarian of the same name referred to by I'tsing. If the identity is correct, as the grammarian Bhartrhari (author of the Vākyapadiya) died in 651 A.D. as recorded by the said Chinese traveller, the work must be assigned to the first half of the 7th cent. A.D.

The Sringārasātaka, along with the two other Sātakas of Bhartrhari, enjoys great popularity in India. Although some of its stanzas are sensuous, the work on the whole is of a high order.

### AMARUKA'S AMARUSĀTAKA (7th cent. A.D.)

Amarusātaka is the most popular of the love lyrics. It contains 100 delightful stanzas dwelling on the various phases of love. Each stanza is self-contained and embodies a charming pen-picture of some blissful experience or dejection or anger or devotion of a lover. "It is remarkable how, with a subject so limited, in situations and emotions so similar, the poet succeeds in arresting the attention with surprising turns of thought, and with subtle touches which are ever new. The love which Amaru as well as other Indian lyrists, portrays is not of the romantic and ideal, but rather of the sensuous type. Nevertheless his work often shows delicacy of feeling and refinement of thought. Such, for instance, is the case when he describes a wife watching in the gloaming for the return of her absent husband." (Macdonell, page 342)

The author of the work, Amaruka, is not identified. As both Vāmana (800 A.D.) and Ānandavardhana (850 A.D.) quote from his work, it has to be assigned to about the 7th cent. A.D.

According to an incredible tradition the authorship of this work goes to Sāṅkarācārya, the great Advaita teacher, who, it is stated, gave vent to his sensuous experiences in the form of these stanzas, when he had transmigrated into the dead body of a king and enjoyed conjugal delights in his harem.

**BILHAÑA's CAURAPĀNCĀS'IKĀ (11th cent. A.D.)**

The Caurapañcās'ikā represents in fifty pretty stanzas the sweet recollections of the delightful pleasures a lover had experienced in the company of his beloved. This small lyric is by the Kashmirian Bilhañā (c. 1080 A.D.), the author of the Vikramāñkadevacarita. According to a tradition, Bilhañā enjoyed secretly the love of the daughter of his patron king who, on discovering it, ordered that the poet should be hanged. While being led away the poet recollected his pleasant experiences with the princess and gave expression to them in the form of these 50 stanzas, each beginning with the words 'Even now I remember'. Moved by the genuine pathos of the stanzas, the king is said to have forgiven the poet and bestowed on him the hand of his daughter.

**GOVARDHANA's ĀRYĀSAPTAS'ATI (12th cent. A.D.)**

Āryāsaptas'ati is a lyric of 700 erotic stanzas composed in the Āryā metre by GOVARDHANA, a court poet of Lakṣmaṇa (12th cent. A.D.) of Bengal. While Hāla's Saptas'ati is a mere collection of Prākṛt verses of different writers, the present one is an original work of Govardhana in Sanskrit. The stanzas, which are in the order of the Sanskrit alphabet, deal with various aspects of love. There are several commentaries on this work.

## JAYADEVA's GĪTAGOVINDA (12th cent. A.D.)

The *Gitagovinda* is an excellent lyric by Jayadeva who along with Govardhana, Dhoyi, Sārana and Umāpatidhara made up the five gems of the court of Lakṣmanasena of Bengal (12th cent. A.D.). It depicts the love of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Every emotion of their love is dwelt upon; — longing, jealousy, hope, disappointment, anger, reconciliation and fruition. The poem is obviously based on the popular Kṛṣṇa festivals celebrated in the yātrās of Bengal. It is in the form of a primitive drama with just three characters Kṛṣṇa, Rādhā and her friend who engage only in a kind of lyrical monologue, and is regarded to represent the transition between pure lyric and pure drama. The poem consists of 12 cantos named after the particular treatment of the hero in each of them, e.g., अक्लेशकेशव, मुग्धमधुसूदन, नागरनारायण, सानन्दटामोदर etc. The stanzas are grouped into sets of eight and hence the name *Aṣṭapadi* to the work. The stanzas have an enchanting melody about them.

Grace of diction, abundant alliteration and complex rhymes occurring in the beginning, in the middle and end of the metrical lines not only add to the melody of the verses but also make the expression of exuberant erotic emotions very impressive. The love aspect of the poem is given an allegorical interpretation by Indian commentators. Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā stand for the Supreme Being (Paramātman) and the Individual Soul (Jivātman) respectively. The relationship (Nāyikā-nāyakabhāvā) between the two lovers is indicative of the relationship between the individual soul and the Supreme Being. Thus, the poem depicts the

yearning of the Jīva for union with the Paramātmā or god. This interpretation has lent to the poem a devotional colour and made it very popular. The work is admired all over the country and is sung on occasions of worship and during musical performances. Although the devotional element of the work is thus stressed, its erotic value is greater.

Jayadeva is a poet of high accomplishment. The elegance of his composition and the beauty and music of his diction, are admirable. 'Both in its emotional and literary aspects, the *Gitagovinda* occupies a distinctive place in the history of Sanskrit poetry.'

### DETACHED LYRICAL VERSES

Plenty of detached verses of a lyrical character depicting an amatory situation or sentiment are found preserved in Anthologies and works on Alāṅkāra. 'Bearing evidence of great wealth of observation and depth of feeling, they are often drawn by a master-hand. Many of them are in matter and form gems of perfect beauty.' Numerous Sanskrit poets and poetesses are known to us only through such detached stanzas. For instance, the *SADUKTIKARNĀMRTA* compiled by S'RĪDHARASENA of Bengal in 1200 A.D. contains 2368 verses by 446 different writers; the *SĀRNĀGADHARAPADDHATI* of the 14th cent. gives 4689 stanzas of 264 authors, arranged in 163 sections; VALLABHA DEVA's *SUBHĀSITĀVALĪ* presents in 101 sections 3527 stanzas drawn from the works of more than 350 poets.

## 2. THE DEVOTIONAL LYRIC

Devotional lyrics are innumerable in Sanskrit. We have already pointed out how the hymns of the *R̥gveda* and numerous passages in the Epics and *Purāṇas* are outbursts of devotion to the deities adored by the particular devotees. In the classical age, saints and poets, philosophers and preachers have all contributed richly to this literature by composing songs and prayers mostly in verse. Some of them are of high literary merit and reveal rich poetic fancy.

The earliest work of this class in the classical age is the *S'YĀMALĀDĀNDAKA* which is generally attributed to *KĀLIDĀSA*. It is in a type of rhythmic prose called the dandaka and adores the goddess of learning. The *CANDĪS'ATAKA* of *BĀNA* in 102 *Sragdharā* verses extols *Pārvati*'s glory. The *SŪRYAS'ATAKA* of *MAYŪRA*, who is believed to be the father-in-law of *Bāna*, has invoked the Sun in 100 verses abounding in alliterations and yamakas, and a tradition mentions that, as an effect of this invocation, the author was cured of his leprosy.

The authorship of a number of stotras is attributed to *SAṄKARĀCĀRYA* (632-664 A.D.), the great exponent of Advaita. The *KANAKADHĀRĀSTOTRA*, the *LAKṢMĪNRSIMHASTOTRA*, the *MOHAMUDGARA* or *BHAJAGOVINDASTOTRA* and the *SAUNDARYALAHARĪ* are the most famous among them. *MUKUNDAMĀLA*, a charming *vāiśnavite* lyric written in about 700 A.D. is by king *KULAS'EKHARA* of Kerala whose identity with the saint *Kulas'ekhara Alwār* is disputed. *MŪKAPĀṄCĀSATI* by *MŪKA* who was born dumb, is in praise of *Kāmāksī* of *Kāñcī* by worshipping whom the poet is said to have gained the

power of speech. This poet is considered to be a contemporary of SĀNKARA. The VAKROKTRIPĀNCĀ-ŚIKĀ by RATNĀKĀRA, who is the author of Haravijaya, employs vakrokti in all its 50 stanzas. ĀNANDAVARDHANA'S DEVĪSĀTAKA which is in praise of Pārvatī abounds in sābdālāñkāras and was produced in about 850 A.D. under the patronage of Avantivarman of Kashmir. The CATUHS'LOKĪ and STOTRARATNA are two excellent stotras in praise of Laksmī and Viṣṇu by YĀMUNA an exponent of the Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta even prior to Rāmānuja. The S'ARĀṄĀGATIGADYA, S'RĪRĀṄGA-GADYA, and VAIKUTṄHAGADYA are three admirable stotras in beautiful prose by the great RĀMĀNUJĀ-CĀRYA (1017-1137 A.D.) The PĀṄCASTAVAS viz., S'rīstava, Atimānuṣastava, Varadarājastava, Sundarabāhustava, and Vaikuṇthastava of S'RĪ-VATSĀṄKA, a disciple of Rāmānuja, are of a very high order. The S'rīgunaratnakos'a and Raṅgrājastava of Parāś'arabhatta, son of S'rīvatsāṄka are in a dignified style. The KṛṣṇAKARNĀMRTA of Līlās'uka is in praise of Kṛṣṇa and vividly describes the sports of Kṛṣṇa in 310 elegant verses divided into 3 āśvāsas. The devotional element is uppermost in this lyric as against the erotic in the Gītagovinda. The poem is widely popular throughout the country. The poet, who, it is said, was known by the name Bilvamaṅgala originally, seems to have hailed from Malabar although there is a view that he belonged to Orissa. Even his date is not definite. He is assigned to different periods from the 9th to the 15th century A.D. Perhaps the authorship of the largest number of stotras of real literary value goes to Venkatanātha, popularly

known as *Vedānta Desika* (1268-1376 A.D.). His command over Sanskrit, poetic talents and devotional fervour have given to his stotras a charm and grace which we miss even in some of the wellknown *kāvyas*. Two of his stotras, viz., the *Raghuviragadya* and *Garudadandaka* are in exquisite prose. His *Acyutas'ataka* is a lyric in *Prākṛt*. Among the devotional works of *Ānandatīrtha* (1197-1277 A.D.) the *Dvādas'astotra* is famous.

*Appayyadikṣita*'s *Varadarājastava* (1600 A.D.), an imitation of the *Varadarājapañcāśat* of *Vedānta Desika*, is a beautiful devotional poem. The *Nārāyanīya* by *Nārāyanabhatta* of Kerala, which is almost a summary of the *Bhāgavata*, is in praise of *Kṛṣṇa*. The *Ānandamandākini* of *Madhusūdana-sarasvati* (1600 A.D.) describes *Kṛṣṇa* from foot to head. The *Mukundamuktāvalī* and *Gandharva-prārthanāstaka* are by *Rūpagosvāmin*, the pupil of *Kṛṣṇacaitanya*. The five *laharīs*, namely, *Sudhā*, *Amṛta*, *Lakṣmī*, *Karunā* and *Gaṅgā* *laharīs*, are by *Jagannāthapandita* (1590-1665 A.D.) who was honoured as 'Pānditarāja' by the emperor Shah Jehan. These lyrics are noted for their lucidity and diction. The *Ānandasāgarastava* and *S'ivotkarṣamañjari* of *Nilakanthadikṣita* (17th cent. A.D.), are quite famous. The *Kṛṣṇalīlātarāṅginī* of *Nārāyanatīrtha* (18th cent. A.D.) in 12 *taraṅgas* describes the story of *Kṛṣṇa*'s exploits. Every stanza has a sweetness about it, particularly when it is set to music in some special tunes. The verses are very popular as they are adaptable also to dance and gesticulation. Similar are the compositions of *Muttusvāmi Dikṣitar* of the 19th cent. These are noted for their melody and depth of devotion.

## CHAPTER VIII

### GNOMIC AND DIDACTIC POETRY

Gnomes are short and pithy expressions of moral maxims, and didactic compositions are intended to give instructions. Thus the line of demarcation between the two is very slender. Gnomic poetry in Sanskrit is pre-eminently didactic. This type of poetry embodies traditional wisdom acquired by a close observation of men, their manners and morals, and therefore can be called *Ethical Poetry*. A special feature of this poetry is that it consists of verses which are in the form of self-contained general statements.

To give a brief survey of this class of Sanskrit Poetry, we must start from the oldest Sanskrit literature available. Thus in the *R̥gveda* we first come across moral stanzas which gradually grow to abundance in the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*, the *Upaniṣads*, and the *Gitā*. In the *Mahābhārata* and the *Purāṇas*, the scope for such stanzas being wider, we find them in polished forms treating of a variety of subjects such as current ethics, joys and sorrows of life, follies of men and women, fickleness of power and wealth, inefficacy of mere human efforts, etc. We may mention next the *DHAMMAPADA* as it is full of very fine maxims; and also the *PAṄCATANTRA* which abounds in wise sayings. The dramas and *kāvyas* of every one of the Indian poets contain a number of beautiful and impressive reflections on various aspects and problems of life and men, which almost invariably tend towards moralising. The appeal such stanzas

had for people was naturally great and therefore, in due time, compilations of stanzas of different poets were made and thus such works as the *SADUKT-KARĀMRTA*, *SĀRĀNGADHARAPADDHATI*, *KAVĪNDRAVACANASAMUCCAYA*, *SUBHĀSITĀVALĪ*, etc., came into being. Side by side, a good number of original works was produced by individual writers and most of them have been quite popular.

The *CĀNAKYA NĪTISĀRA* attributed to Cānakya contains 340 verses which deal with some general rules of conduct. Other versions and abridgements of this work have come down to us under the titles of *CĀNAKYA S'ATAKA*, *LAGHU CĀNAKYA*, *VṛDDHA CĀNAKYA*, *RĀJANĪTI SAMUCCAYA*, and *CĀNAKYARĀJANĪTI*. All these seem to be mere compilations. The identity of this author with the author of the *Arthasāstra* is disputed. Keith says — 'That it was composed by Cānakya, the minister of Candragupta, is absurd.' The *NĪTIDVĪṢĀSTIKA* of Sundarapāndya (500 A.D.) is a fine didactic work of 120 stanzas in the Āryā metre. The author, who, in all likelihood was a native of Madurai, the capital of the Pāndyas, must have been prior to the author of the *Pañcatantra* and Kumārila (7th cent.), who quote from this work. So he is assigned to the period between the 4th and 6th century A.D. The *S'ISYALEKHĀDHARMAKĀVYA* is by Candragomin (470 A.D.), author of the *Cāndra vyākaraṇa*. It is in the form of a letter addressed to prince Ratnakīrti and dwells in 114 verses on the evanescence of worldly treasures in the Buddhistic manner.

The *NĪTISĀTKA* of Bhārtṛhari is the most popular and perhaps the best also among the

works of this class. It is divided into 10 paddhatis dealing with ignorance, learning, self-respect, wealth, the wicked, the virtuous and so on. It is of high literary value and widely studied. Its stanzas, each one forming a unit by itself, are committed to memory and frequently quoted. Similar is the VAIRĀGYAS'ATAKA of the same author. Although according to tradition all the stanzas of these two S'atakas and also those of the author's S'ringāras'ataka are Bhartrhari's own compositions, there is a view that they are only collections and that only some of the verses there-of are his.

The BODHICARYĀVATĀRA of Sāntideva (c. 600 A.D.) is a popular work enumerating the duties of a Bodhisattva, particularly laying stress on love for mankind. The SIKSĀSAMUCCAYA and the SŪTRASAMUCCAYA are by the same author.

The NĪTISĀRA of Ghatakarpura who is believed to be the contemporary of Kālidāsa, is an amusing didactic poem in 21 verses in the form of a dialogue between a hog and a lion.

The MOHAMUDGARA of Sāṅkarācārya already mentioned under lyric poetry, the SĀTAS'LOKĀ and some shorter poems ascribed to the same authorship are chiefly didactic in their import.

The KUTTINIMATA, also called S'AMBHALIMATA, is in the form of a manual for courtesans. It is by Dāmodaragupta who was a minister of king Jayāpīda of Kashmir (779-813 A.D.). Numerous citations from this work are found in the anthologies.

The BHALLATAS'ATAKA of Bhallata, written during the rule of king Sāṅkaravarman of Kashmir (884-902 A.D.) has a satirical tone and ridicules

undiscriminating patrons, although it dwells on morals. His verses are quoted by Abhinavagupta, Kṣemendra and Mammata.

The *SUBHĀSITARATNASANDOHA* was written in 994 A.D. in 32 chapters by Amitagati, a Jain writer. It deals with the rules of good conduct, but criticises Hindu practices and gods. The *DHARMAPRAKĀSIKĀ* of the same writer, written in 1014 A.D., is a direct attack on Hinduism.

A number of didactic works have been written by Kṣemendra (c. 11th cent. A.D.), the polymoth of Kashmir. His *KALĀVILĀSA* in 10 chapters deals with the follies of men. His *CĀRUCARYĀ* is in 100 verses about the rules of good conduct, while the *CATURVARGASAṄGRAHA* is an admirable exposition of the four Purusārthas, namely, Dharma, Artha, Kāma and Mokṣa. The *SEVYASEVAKOPADES'A*, another work of his in 61 stanzas, is in the form of an advice to the masters and their servants. His *DARPADALANA*, which has 7 chapters, condemns pride arising from the <sup>1</sup>seven different causes, viz., noble birth, riches, learning, beauty, valour, charity and asceticism. In the 8 chapters of his *SAMAYAMĀTRĀKĀ*, Kṣemendra deals with the wiles of harlots.

The *ANYOKTIMUKTĀLATĀS'ATAKA* containing 108 stanzas by Sambhu whose patron was Harṣa of Kashmir (1089-1101 A.D.), employs *anyokti* to ridicule the follies of men.

The *MUGDHOPADES'A* (1150 A.D.) by Jalhana, the author of *SOMAPĀLAVILĀSA*, contains only 66

1. कुलं विचं श्रुतं रूपं शौर्यं दानं तपस्था ।  
प्राधान्येन मनुष्याणां सत्तैते मदहेतवः ॥

stanzas and, like Kṣemendra's *Samayamātrikā*, warns against the wiles of harlots.

The *SĀNTISĀTAKA* or *SILHANA-SĀTAKA* by Silhana of Kashmir is in imitation of Bhartr̥hari's work. It is quoted in the *Saduktikarnāmr̥ta* composed in 1205 A.D. It deals with the need to practise mental peace.

The *S'RNGĀRA-VAIRĀGYA-TARĀNGINĪ* of Somaprabhācārya, composed in 1276 A.D., dwells on the disadvantages of delighting in the love of women and the advantages of living a detached life. The work consists of 46 stanzas of a twofold meaning.

The *SUBHĀSITĀNĪVĪ* of Veṅkatanātha or Vedānta Desīka (1268-1369 A.D.) is an original didactic work in 145 stanzas divided into 12 sections and sets forth rules of good behaviour. The *VAIRĀGYAPĀÑCAKA* consisting of only five stanzas is in the form of a gentle satire and speaks of the need for practising detachment.

The *NĪTIMĀÑJARĪ* of Dyā Dviveda, written towards the close of the 15th cent. A.D., is an interesting and instructive work illustrating about 200 verses of maxims by tales culled from the commentary of Sāyana on the Vedas.

The *DṛŚIĀNTASĀTAKA* is by Kusumadeva. He is earlier than Vallabhadeva (15th cent. A.D.) who quotes from it in his *Subhāśitāvali*. Each stanza of this work embodies a maxim of life and an appropriate illustration of it.

The *NĪTLI*, *S'RNGĀRA* and *VAIRĀGYA SĀTAKAS* of Dhanadarāja son of Dehala are far inferior to

the *s'atakas* of Bhartr̥hari whom he has clearly imitated. They were composed in 1434 A.D.

The **BHĀMINIVILĀSA** of Jagannāthapandita (1590-1655 A.D.), the famous Ālāṅkārika, is a work dealing with *anyokti*, *sṛ̥ngāra*, *karma* and *sānti* in four *ullāsās* of 101, 100, 19, and 32 stanzas respectively. It is in a natural but vigorous style. The poem is said to have been named after his wife Bhāmini whose death had filled him with grief.

The **UPADEŚA-S'ATAKA** of Gumiṇi and the **SUBHĀSITA-KAUSTUBHA** of Veṅkatādhvarin (17th cent.) offer to instruct people on good conduct.

The **SĀNTIVILĀSA** and the **VAIRĀGYAS'ATAKA** of Nilakanthadikṣita (17th cent. A.D.) set forth the advantages of tranquility and renunciation in 51 and 100 stanzas respectively. Of great ethical interest is the **SABHĀRAṄJANA-S'ATAKA** of the same writer. His **KALIVIDAMBANA** exposes the several vices of the Kali age in about a hundred satirical and pithy verses. His **ANYĀPADEŚA-S'ATAKA** is a satire on human weaknesses; but, by employing *anyāpades'a*, it gives lessons on good conduct.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE CAMPŪ

The type of literature known as CAMPŪ is in the form of prose interspersed with verse. This form is expected to provide full scope for the poet to reveal his talents freely and entertain the reader with varying melodies. Bhoja compares this admixture of prose and poetry to a happy blending of vocal and instrumental music,<sup>1</sup> while Venkatādhavarin considers it a combination of grapes and honey.<sup>2</sup> We have plenty of passages where prose comes in between verses in the Vedic Ākhyānas, in the Buddhistic Jātakas, in the Purānas and in the fables. But it is difficult to say that these mark the beginnings of the campū, because, although the form is there, intrinsically there is nothing original or novel in them to lead to the development of the campū species in which the combination is of the ornate kind of prose and poetry.

The word campū is derived from the root चम्प<sup>3</sup> (10 u.—to go; to move) and is generally used in the feminine. Dandin recognises this campū type of composition in his Kāvyādarsa (I 81) where he gives the definition 'गच्छपच्छमयी काचिच्चम्पूरित्यभिधीयते'. From this it is obvious that the Campūkāvyas were in existence even before him, i.e., in the 6th cent. at the latest. But no Campū-kāvya as such belonging

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1. गद्यानुबन्धरसमिश्रितपद्यमूर्जिः दृद्या हि वाद्यकल्या कलितेव गीतिः ॥  
—Campū-Rāmāyaṇa I 3.
2. सङ्गः कस्य हि न स्वदेत मनसे माध्वीकमूढीकयोः— विश्वगुणादर्श 4
3. चम्पयतीति चम्पूः—that which moves smoothly.

to that period has come down to us, although actual Campū-like compositions of the early centuries of the Christian era have been preserved in the inscribed Parsastis of Harisena and several others. The Campū-kāvyas we now have are all of a period later than the 9th cent. A.D.

THE NALACAMPŪ or the Damayantikathā by TRIVIKRAMABHATTA (c. 900 A.D.) is the oldest campū that has come down to us. It deals with the story of Nala and Damayanti and stops with 7 chapters in an unfinished state. It is said that a poet challenged Trivikrama's father in his absence and that as a sequel to it the son began composing extempore the Nala-campū and stopped with seven chapters, leaving the work incomplete, when the father himself came there. The style of the author is an involved one, as he imitates Bāna and Subandhu. The advice of the minister Sālankāyaṇa to Nala is clearly an imitation of the S'ukanāsopades'a in Bāna's Kādambarī. By comparing the dawn to the confluence of the Yamunā and Gangā rivers he has come to be known as Yamunā-Trivikrama. His work has HARACARANASAROJA as its mark. Vālmīki, Vyāsa, Bāna and Gunādhya are mentioned in the prefatory portion of the work. The poet himself, known also as Simhāditya, is mentioned there as the son of Nemāditya of Sāndilya gotra. He is the author also of the MADĀLASĀ-CAMPŪ and the NAUSĀRI GRANT (dated 915 A.D.) of the Rāstrakūta king Indra III. This fixes up his date as the early years of the 10th cent. AD.

THE YAS'ASTILAKA-CAMPŪ or Yas'odharacarita is an extensive work in 8 Āśvāsas, written in 959

A.D., by the Digambara Jaina SOMADEVA or Somprabhasūri who was patronised by the eldest son of the Cālukya Arikesarin III, a feudatory of the Rāstrakūta king Kṛṣṇa. It relates the story of Yaśodhara who was the lord of Avantī, the machinations of his wife, his repeated births and final conversion to the Jaina faith. The last 3 chapters of the work are in the form of a hand-book of Jaina ethics. The author mentions the names of some ancient poets whose names we have yet to hear elsewhere. His another work NīTIVĀKYĀMRTA follows Cāṇakya's Arthasāstra.

THE JĪVANDHARA-CAMPŪ by HARICANDRA is assigned to the 6th cent. A.D. by some scholars, while Prof. Kuppuswami Sastri holds that this author lived after 900 A.D. Of course one Haricandra is spoken of as a celebrated author by Bāṇa, but it is not certain that he is the same as the author of the Jivandhara-campū. His identity with the author of the Dharmasārmābhodaya is also disputed. The subject matter of this campū is the story of Jivandhara based on the Uttara-purāṇa of Guṇabhadra and is divided into 11 lambakas.

THE CAMPŪ-RĀMĀYĀNA, or the Bhoja-campū as it is also called, is the most popular among campū works. It is ascribed to Bhoja's authorship only up to the end of the Sundarakāṇḍa. The subsequent Yuddhakāṇḍa is by Lakṣmaṇa, author of the Bhārata-campū-tilaka. The sequel to this work embracing the Uttara-kāṇḍa is called Uttara-campū. Many Uttara-campūs by different writers are available. The view that the Campū-rāmāyāna is the work of Bhoja (of Dhārā) is probably

wrong; for, the colophon of the work simply states that it is 'विदर्भराजविरचित्'. The exact name of the author is not mentioned. But at the beginning of the Yuddhakānda, its author Laksmaṇa clearly states that the earlier kāṇdas were composed by Bhoja, which we may accept as quite reliable. Then comes the question 'Who is this Bhoja?' He cannot be the same as the author of the Sarasvatīkāṇthābhāraṇa, Śringāraprakāṣṭa etc., as the colophons of these works are not the same as that of the Campū-rāmāyaṇa. Cf.

I a) इति श्रीमहाराजाधिराज श्री भोजदेवविरचिते सरस्वतीकण्ठाभरणे...

b) इति श्री महाराजाधिराज श्री भोजदेवविरचिते शृङ्गारप्रकाशे.....

II इति श्री विदर्भराजविरचिते चम्पूरामायणे.....

The Sarasvatīkāṇthābhāraṇa, Śringāraprakāṣṭa and other works are assigned to Bhoja of Dhārā. The city of Dhārā is in Mālva, while Vidarbha, of which the author of the Campūrāmāyaṇa was king is Berar. There is also this geographical difficulty to accept the identity. All the same, it is not unlikely that the colophon of the Campūrāmāyaṇa originally read इति वैदर्भराजविरचिते etc., in order to lay stress on the mastery its author had over the Vaidarbhi style and that the term वैदर्भराज became विदर्भराज in the hands of later scribes who perhaps could not comprehend the real significance of this peculiar term 'VAIDARBHI-RAJA'.<sup>4</sup>

The Campūrāmāyaṇa is written in the simple and graceful Vaidarbhi style. It embodies all the Kāvyaguṇas. Its language is fluent but not pedantic.

4. See our Introduction p.13 f. to the चम्पूरामायण (1963 Edn.)

It abounds in alliterations and homely similes. Bhoja's descriptions are highly imaginative.<sup>5</sup>

THE BHĀGAVATA-CAMPŪ in 6 stabakas, narrating the story of the Bhāgavata, is by the poet known only by his title Abhinava Kālidāsa. The poet is believed to have been in the court of the South Indian king Rājasēkhara (11th cent. A.D.). He is also the author of the ABHINAVA-BHĀRATA-CAMPŪ.

THE UDAYASUNDARĪ-KATHĀ by SODDHALA, a ksatriya writer, has already been noticed under 'Prose romances.' This Kathā is a campū work, but on the model of Bāna's Kādambarī. Even here it is a parrot that narrates the story. The first chapter is autobiographical. Many ancient poets are mentioned. There is a very graphic reference to Abhinanda, Vākpatirāja, Kālidāsa and Bāna. This Campū has 'Sārasvatas'ri' as its mark.

THE RĀMĀNUJACAMPŪ describes the life and achievements of Rāmānuja, the well known exponent of the Visiṣṭādvaita, in an elegant style. It was produced by one RĀMĀNUJĀCĀRYA of the 16th cent. A.D. The CAMPŪBHĀRATA of ANANTABHATTA relating to the story of the Mahābhārata in 12 stabakas belongs to the same period. Being a brief summary of the elaborate Mahābhārata, it is a very popular work. A BHĀGAVATACAMPŪ is also his and it is said to have been composed to compete with Abhinava Kālidāsa's work of the same

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5. रजनिचरमभागे वारसीमन्तिनीनां करतलकलिताभिर्दीपिकामार्जनीभिः ।  
दिशि दिशि परिमृष्टं यस्तस्तत्समस्तं हृदयमवजगाहे केवलं रावणस्य ॥

6. वागीश्वरं हन्त भजेऽभिनन्दमर्थेश्वरं वाक्पतिराजमीडे ।  
रसेश्वरं खौमि च कालिदासं बाणं तु सर्वेश्वरमानतोऽसि ॥

name. Anantabhatta has to be assigned to a period not later than the 15th cent. A.D. as he is quoted by Nārāyaṇabhatta of Malabar (1560-1646 A.D.) who has written the Nārāyaṇīya noticed earlier.

The NīLAKANTHAVIJAYACAMPŪ of NīLAKAṄTHA DīKSITA, a work in 5 chapters, describes in a pedantic language how Nilakantha (Siva) became Nila-kantha (blue-necked). The poet himself says that the work was completed in 1657 A.D. He is the author of 14 works of which 3 are technical. His two Mahākāvyas and seven lyrical and didactic works have already been noticed. His NALACARITA-NĀTAKA, a play in seven acts has not yet been published.

The VISVAGUNĀDARSA-CAMPŪ of VENKATĀDHVARIN is an original work both in form and spirit. It presents a very vivid picture of the good and bad aspects of men and their manners and customs in the several parts of South India during his time. Men of all ranks and professions are criticised and their weaknesses are exposed through the conversation of two Gandharvas named Visvāvasu and Kṛṣṇa in the course of an aerial journey they undertake. Another work of the same author is VARADĀBHYUDAYA or HASTIGIRI-CAMPŪ in praise of the deity Varadarāja of Kāñcī. His UTTARA-CAMPŪ dealing with the story of the Uttarakānda of the Rāmāyaṇa is incomplete. His Srinivāsa-campū, in glorification of the deity Venkatesvara on the Tirupati Hills, is in two parts of five Ucchvāsas each. The style of this work is highly artificial and exhibits the author's skill in handling the s'abdālankāras and bandhas.

## MINOR CAMPŪS

The above is a brief survey of only such of the Campūs which are of a literary value. Besides these, there are many minor Campū works. We notice some of them here.

THE *GAṄGAVAMSĀNUCARITA* by Vāsudevaratha (c. 1420 A.D.) gives an account of the Gaṅga dynasty which ruled over the Kalinga. The *VARADĀMBIKĀPARIJNAYACAMPŪ* by Tirumalāmbā, the queen of Acyutarāya of Vijayanagar, describes the marriage of princess Varadāmbikā with her own husband. The *PĀṄCĀLĪSVAYAMVARACAMPŪ* is by Nārāyanabhatta (c. 1600 A.D.) of Malabar. The *ĀNANDAKANDACAMPŪ* describing Kṛṣṇa's exploits in his childhood was written in 1632 A.D. by Mitramisra, author of the law book *Viramitrodaya*. Cidambara (16th cent. A.D.), the author of the *Rāghavapāṇḍaviya*, has written two campūs, viz., 1. the *BHĀGAVATACAMPŪ* and 2. the *PAṄCAKALYĀNACAMPŪ* simultaneously describing the marriages of Rāma, Kṛṣṇa Viṣṇu, Siva and Skanda. Sesa-kṛṣṇa of the same period described the bringing down of the celestial Pārijāta tree to the earth in his *PĀRIJĀTAHARANA-CAMPŪ*. Cakrakavi wrote about 1653 A.D. his *DRAUPADĪPARINAYA-CAMPŪ*. The *CITRACAMPŪ* of Bāṇesvara Vidyālāṅkāra (c. 1700 A.D.) is a quasi historical work containing a description of a pilgrimage tour of Citrasena, a Mahārāja of Burdwan. The *KUMĀRASAMBHAVA-CAMPŪ* by Rāja S'erfoji of Tanjore (19th cent. A.D.) is a summary of Kālidāsa's *Kumārasambhava*.

## CHAPTER X

### SANSKRIT DRAMA

#### 1. THE ORIGIN OF THE SANSKRIT DRAMA

THE Drama is an important branch of Sanskrit literature in as much as it throws plenty of light on our social customs during the early centuries of the Christian era. The master pieces of the Sanskrit drama which are also the earliest we possess belong to the post Epic period. Thus the Sanskrit drama, with its first appearance in the history of literature, is already perfect. Its form is settled and it does not subsequently undergo any important modification. Although its form may be traced to the dialogue hymns of the Rgveda, the wide gap of thousands of years between those hymns and the earliest available acted drama has wrapt the origin of the drama in obscurity.

*Greek Origin* — Subsequent to Alexander's invasion, the Greek dramas were being often staged in the courts of Indian kings. Curiously enough the Greek plays resemble the Indian plays in outward form. Both of them are divided into acts which are generally five in number. All the actors depart from the stage at the end of each act. Entry of a new character is hinted at by a character already present on the stage. In addition to these resemblances, the use of the word *Yavanikā* in the Sanskrit dramas for curtain on the stage,—Yavana being connected with Ionian,—and also the introduction of Yavana girls as attendants on the Hindu heroes led to the view

that the Indian drama had come under Greek influence and that the earliest plays in India were modelled upon Greek plays. This 'Greek Origin' was once widely accepted. But, later, it was shown that the differences between the Indian and the Greek drama are more fundamental than the resemblance. The two differ both in agreement and principle. The Greeks recognise whereas the Hindus ignore the unity of time and place. The Hindus recognise what may be termed as the unity of *Rasa*, which is nowhere of conspicuous appearance in the Greek drama. The Chorus of the Greek drama is entirely unknown in India. The happy blending of comic and tragic incidence which is characteristic of Indian plays is altogether against the rules of the Greek stage. The keynote of Greek poetry is pride of life and joy, but Sanskrit dramas, though they invariably end well, generally have an ascetic implication and seem to hint at the vanity of life. Besides this, the reference to drama in the *Mahābhāṣya* of Patañjali (2nd cent. B.C.) and the discovery of the plays of Bhāsa who is generally assigned to a still earlier period than Patañjali, go against this 'theory of Greek origin' as the advent of Greeks in India belongs to a later period.

If the Indian drama is of indigenous growth as it is now admitted practically by all, it must have undergone a long course of development before it reached such perfection as is found for instance in Kālidāsa's works. But there is nothing which stands to the classical drama in the same relation as the early epics, for instance, stand to the later court poetry. It is however certain that

such earlier forms did 'exist. They were either not committed to writing or disappeared in the course of history. Although no direct evidence of this growth is available, the indirect evidence is fairly plentiful; for instance, Pāṇini refers to Nāt-sūtras. Cf.,—पराशर्यश्चिलालिभ्यां भिक्षुनटसूत्रयोः (4-3-110); कर्मन्दकृशाश्चादिनिः (4-3-111). Again Patañjali refers to more than one play as being well known in his time, e.g. Kamsavadha and Balibandha. These are indirect evidences to indicate the great antiquity of the Indian drama.

*Traditional Account* — Tradition ascribes the origin of dramatic representation to Bharata who is supposed to have received knowledge of the art directly from Brahma, the Creator. The term Bharata signifies an actor, but, it is doubtful whether this sense is primary or only derived from the name of an old teacher of the scenic art. There still exists an extensive work in Epic verse called the Nātyasāstra ascribed to Bharata. Though an old treatise, it can hardly be assigned to an earlier period than some centuries after the Christian Era, and not improbably it is a revised edition of an old Nātya-sūtra.

According to a statement in the Nātyasāstra, at the request of the gods Brahma created the fifth Veda called the Nātyaveda taking the element of recitation from the Rgveda, music from the Sāma-veda, action from the Yajurveda and Rasa from the Atharvaveda. Siva and Pārvatī provided their tāṇḍava and lāsyā dances respectively of violent and tender emotions. Viṣṇu contributed the four kinds of dramatic styles and Viṣvakarma,

the divine architect, constructed a theatre in Paradise. Then Brahma instructed Bharata in the art of Nātya.

*Religious or Ritualistic Origin*— Scholars have tried to trace the later classical drama to the ancient vedic literature. That literature contains certain compositions over a dozen, which are somewhat dramatic in character. In the Rgveda, for example, there are hymns in the form of dialogues which, if recited with appropriate action and with parts assigned to separate actors, would make miniature plays, e.g., the dialogues of Yama and Yami and of Urvashi and Pururavas. In the Yajurveda and the Brāhmaṇas, near alike to it in several respects, we have, in connection with certain ritualistic practices, performances more or less dramatic in character; again in the Sāmaveda we have the art of music cultivated to a considerable extent, an art whose assistance to stage is well recognised. It is always well-known that early forms of worship everywhere generally include what may be described as the source of the dramatic action. If all these were substantiated, it would prove that the Indian drama had its origin in ritual or religion. We cannot question this conclusion, but it has to be remarked that the Sanskrit drama as it is now found, does not probably go back for its source to this early Vedic age. What seems to have happened is that the germs of the drama as found in those early times died out and we have consequently to look for the source of our drama elsewhere, because later Vedic literature contains relatively less dramatic material than the earlier ones; for example, while in the Rgveda we have a

dozen Sūktas dramatically performed, in the Atharva-veda we have only one.

*Secular Origin*—Professors Konow, Pischel, and Luders trace the origin of the Sanskrit drama to the *Dumb show*, the *Puppet plays* and the *Shadow plays* respectively. These views suggesting a secular origin to the Sanskrit drama are rejected by Dr. Keith as unhistorical.

*Origin in Krishna Legends*—Dr. Keith views the question in his own way and observes ‘.....the balance of probability therefore is that the Sanskrit Drama came into being shortly after if not before the middle of the 2nd century B.C. and that it was evoked by the combination of epic recitations with the dramatic moment of the Kṛṣṇa legends .....’ This view cannot stand, as it has been shown earlier that the Sanskrit Drama was in existence long before the 2nd century B.C.

*Popular Origin*—What is more probable is that the Sanskrit drama, as now found, had not its beginning in the ancient priestly practices but rather in the popular entertainments of olden times. The arguments in favour of this view are—

1. The nomenclature of the drama.—The very root नट् for example is Prākṛt being the equivalent of Sanskrit नृत्. As other examples of this popular influence in the Sanskrit drama we may mention भारिष, the assistant to the stage-manager, which is really the corruption of Sanskrit मादश; and हाव which is obviously the Prākṛt of मात्र.

2. The rather plentiful use of the Prākṛts in the dramas—This would be inexplicable if the classical drama were not directly connected with a popular institution.

3. The designation of the Sūtradhāra, Stage-manager.—The word literally means 'holder of a string' and should have been borrowed from the puppet play, an ancient form of popular amusement in India.

4. The introduction of a Brahmin talking Prākṛt, as the Vidūṣaka.—Although he contributes to the mirth of the audience, he often occupies a position which is not in conformity with his caste dignity. Such a position is easily understood in the popular drama, but it is hard to explain if we assume that the Sanskrit drama was Brāhminic in its source.

This however should not be understood as suggesting that Indian drama was secular in its origin. Though popular, it was yet religious. This may be inferred for instance from the Nāndī which is something more than the mere benediction commonly found at the beginning of Sanskrit works. It really forms a part of an introductory religious ceremony as is shown by the expression नान्दी-ते सूबधारः । Patañjali as already stated alludes to plays like Kamsavadha. This popular religious drama received literary development in course of time and attained perfection in the plays of Kālidāsa.

## 2. DEVELOPMENT OF THE SANSKRIT DRAMA

This popular religious drama received literary development in course of time. Its original nomenclature and general character had by that time been too well established to be changed through the influence of its new surroundings. As

regards the exact period of this development we know that some kind of religious drama existed as early as Pāṇini (350 B.C.) and that works of the classical secular type were in existence in the Kushan period (75 A.D.). At the same time between the two dates the form of the classical drama was evolved. From the manner in which Sanskrit is mixed with Prākṛt in extant plays it would seem that the drama assumed its final shape at a period when the educated classes were in the habit of using Sanskrit as an ordinary means of communication while the uneducated classes, though not using Sanskrit, fully understood it. This development took place, as indeed in the case of classical literature, generally under royal patronage.

The plays were most frequently performed in palaces. The characters are usually kings and queens and persons of the court. The dramatists were usually court poets and the authorship of a number of plays is ascribed to the kings themselves, as in the case of S'ri Harṣa.

The popular drama did not cease to exist because it assumed a more polished form at courts. While the works of a Kālidāsa or Bhavabhūti were being performed before a courtly audience in the palaces, the popular plays were appealing to humble folk in the open air. They still survive under the names of Yātrās and Yaksagānas which name also declares their religious origin. The plots too of these plays are still religious and there can be no doubt that in India as in Europe the theatre had its origin in religion.

## 3. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SANSKRIT DRAMA

The following are the characteristic features of the Sanskrit drama—

1. *The absence of Tragedy*—Tragedy, as it is commonly understood, is not to be found in Sanskrit dramatic literature. The tragic tension may be there, but only the tragic end is always absent. This is probably to be accounted for by the principle of Hindu ethics that virtue should triumph over vice, and the age-long belief in the grace of gods who would interfere with the daily life of their devotees and save them in times of dire distress.

2. *The Dialogue*—This is invariably carried on in prose interspersed with lyrical stanzas depicting some natural scene or some mental or physical attitude. This means that the Indian drama is of lyric and not of epic origin. The actual plays are essentially lyrical. Their frame-work consists of a number of little poems about the beauties of Nature or personal feelings. The prose dialogue was probably left to improvisation as is the case even now in the popular plays. Then it is probable that the drama arose from songs associated with Abhinaya.

3. *The mixed nature of its language*—This is the most striking feature of the Indian drama. It can hardly be doubted that at the time when such dramas were first composed, the Prākṛts were oral vernaculars, though in the course of the development of the scenic art, they became mixed for dramatic purposes.

4. *Division into Acts*—A Sanskrit play is divided into acts each forming as it were a chapter in the story. Generally the hero appears in each act and an act comes to an end when all the characters have departed from the stage. The unity of time is generally preserved only within each act in which only the actions of a single day are to be exhibited. The audience is familiarised with events which take place between two acts by means of interludes which are of the form of monologues or dialogues. The unity of place is not observed. We may, if we like, divide an act into scenes but no such division is explicitly indicated and the stage is never left vacant till the end of the act. Generally the unity of place also may be said to be respected within the limits of an act. The Indian poet was more eager to secure unity of Rasa.

5. *Prologue*—This is intended to set the plot in motion and the dialogue in it is adjusted accordingly. Some of the prologues introduce the singing of some song. It is again to delay the commencement of the actual play till the arrival of the distinguished patron to witness the performance from the beginning and, at the same time, to keep the audience engaged till then.

6. *Theatrical arrangements*—As regards theatrical arrangements, the standard seems never to have risen much above the level of religious spectacles mentioned by Patañjali. It is somewhat curious that while there are minute stage directions about dress, abhinaya etc., nothing is said in this way regarding change of scene even at the end of

acts. The stage scenery and decoration must accordingly have been of a very simple character.

7. *Artistic merits* — The merits of an Indian drama are more artistic than natural. There is of course in best specimens much freshness and spontaneity, but yet, on the whole, we feel the dramatist was self-conscious while composing his works. This is only in consonance with the rest of the Sanskrit literature, such as the Court Epic. The learned character of the authors, the literary language used and the conventional life of the courts in which the classical drama flourished,—all explain this peculiar feature. One of Kālidāsa's excellences is that though pressed by these circumstances his poetry contains much evidence of first hand observation of men and things.

#### 4. AIM OF THE SANSKRIT DRAMA

Naturally as students of English, we compare Shakespeare with our dramatists. It is not at all improper to compare two literatures so distant as these in time as well as in place; but in all such comparisons it is necessary to guard overselves against a possible mistake. We often assume that literary standards are of absolute value. It is wrong. Every nation develops its own ideal of art and it would be quite unreasonable to judge one author by standards which he did not recognise and perhaps deliberately set aside. We must admit that there is scope for diversity of ideal especially in a subject like art. If so what is the ideal of the Sanskrit drama? The answer to this question is contained in the word RASA. Rasa

generally denotes an emotional state. It also means an inner attitude of detached joy. It is only to the latter that the term *Rasa* is strictly applicable. In the other sense, the word to be used is *Bhāva*, i.e., an emotional state not regarded as experienced by us but merely as an object of our contemplation. This double significance in the word *Rasa* tells us what the theme as well as the aim of the Sanskrit poet is. The theme is emotion and the aim is so to represent it as to arouse in us spectators the kind of detached joy to which reference has been made above. This *Rasa* is peculiar in that it is invariably of the nature of joy, no matter whether that emotion treats of something happy or tragic. The evoking of this joyful experience is the first and foremost task of a dramatist and the whole technique of his art is subordinated to it. All other things like criticisms of life, portraying the character, etc., proceed to the background. Here we see the difference between Shakespeare and the Indian dramatist. Shakespeare works in the forefront the character drawing. With the recognition of this difference in ideals, comparison of English and Indian literatures become profitable to us.

## 5. TYPES OF THE DRAMA

Literary compositions in Sanskrit are of two types, viz., *Śravya* and *Dṛṣṭya*. The *Śravya* group comprises of works in prose and poetry while the *Dṛṣṭya* group of dramatic compositions. Dramas in Sanskrit are of two broad varieties—*RŪPAKAS* and *UPARŪPAKAS*. *Rūpakas* are of ten kinds—1) *Nātaka* 2) *Prakaraṇa* 3) *Bhāṇa* 4) *Prabasana*

5) Dima 6) Vyāyoga 7) Samavākāra 8) Vīthī 9) Anka and 10) Īhāmṛga. Uparūpkas are of 18 kinds—1) Nātikā 2) Trotaka 3) Gosthī 4) Sattaka 5) Nātyarāsaka 6) Prasthāna 7) Ullāpya 8) Kāvya 9) Preñkhāna 10) Rāsaka 11) Samlāpaka 12) Sri-gadita 13) Silpaka 14) Vilāsita 15) Durmallikā 16) Prakaraṇī 17) Hallis'a and 18) Bhāṇikā.

It has been universally accepted that the Nātaka ranks first amongst all varieties of literary compositions. 'Nātakāntam kavītvam' is a well known adage. 'Kāvyeṣu nātakam ramyam' also goes to substantiate the same. In Kālidāsa's own words, the drama is the one entertainment to people of varied tastes.<sup>1</sup>

Bharata sets forth the purpose of dramatic representation thus—

उत्तमाधिमध्यानां नराणां कर्मसंश्रयम् ।  
हितोपदेशजननं धृतिक्रीडासुखादिकृत् ॥  
दुःखार्तानां समर्थानां शोकार्तानां तपस्विनाम् ।  
विश्रान्तिजननं काले नाट्यमेतन्मया कृतम् ॥

—Nātyasāstra I 114 & 115

The existing dramatic literature is not very extensive. The reason for the scarcity is partly that this kind of composition appealed to a limited class of highly cultivated taste. We should also remember that the growth of this literature was checked several centuries ago owing to (1) the invasion of the Mahomedans which unsettled the country and (2) the growth of literature in the regional languages towards which some of the best readers and writers have been drawn.

1. नाट्यं भिन्नरूपेर्जनस्य बहुधाप्येकं समाधनम्—मालविकाभिमित्रम् I 4.

## CHAPTER XI

## DRAMATISTS UPTO FIFTH CENT. A.D.

## I. BHĀSA

*The Bhāsa problem*

Bhāsa was known only by reputation through several references to him by merited writers such as Kālidāsa and Bāna until 1912 when the late Pandit Ganapati Sāstri of Trivandrum published the following thirteen Sanskrit plays—

*a) Based on the Brihatkatha :*

1. Pratijñāyaugandharāyana
2. Svapna-vāsavadatta
3. Avimāraka.

*b) Based on the Ramayana:*

4. Pratimānātaka
5. Abhiṣekanātaka.

*c) Based on the Mahabharata:*

6. Madhyamavyāyoga
7. Pañcarātra
8. Dūta-Vākyā
9. Dūta-Ghatotkaca
10. Karna-bhāra
11. Urubhaṅga.

*d) Based on Krishna's story :* 12. Bālacakarita.

*e) Based on folk-lore :* 13. Cārudatta (a fragment).

None of these plays bore the name of the author. Hence the learned editor, adducing some arguments, put forth his view that—

(1) All the thirteen plays formed the work of one and the same author; and (2) that he was the great Bhāsa owned by Bāna and Kālidāsa as their worthy predecessor.

*(1) All the thirteen plays are by a single author —*  
A close examination of these plays reveal that there are some common features among them—  
All the plays begin with the stage direction 'नाम्यते

ततः प्रविशति सूत्रधारः'. After this a benedictory verse is found, with which the *Sutradhara* commences the prologue of the play. But the classical plays open with the benedictory verse, after which the Sūtra-dhāra is introduced with the direction ततः प्रविशति सूत्रधारः। A strange feature of the opening stage-direction in all these Trivandrum plays is the repetition of the same idea in अ-वे and ततः। The customary practice of mentioning the names of the author of the play, his patron, etc., in the prologue is totally absent in these plays. Prologues usually called प्रस्तावना are called स्थापना here. The BHARATAVĀKYA is the same in most of these plays. The style and language of all these plays are strikingly similar. In many of these plays the device of 'Unintentional dramatic replies' (पताकाल्पना) and the figure of speech मुद्रा for the opening verse, are used. The same names of minor characters, the same type of grammatical irregularities, the same ideas, sentences and expressions repeat themselves. Bharata's rules of dramaturgy are not observed in these plays in as much as deaths, duels and battles are shown and water is actually brought on the stage. Stage-directions are many a time wanting and to be supplied by the readers. The directions given are very brief and indicate rapid action, as in 'Exit and re-enter'. The names of the plays are to be found only at the end (in the colophon). These striking similarities in the thirteen plays naturally point to their common authorship.

(2) *Bhasa is the author of all these plays—*

A careful study of these plays further reveal that  
(a) The grammatical and dramaturgical rules of

Pāṇini and Bharata are not applicable to them which fact shows that they must have been composed before those rules were framed. (b) The frequent use of the expletives च, तु etc. in the s'lokas, the large number of the Anuṣṭubh metre, the simplicity of diction (many a time inadequate to bring out the ideas intended), and the absence of the classical figures of speech take them nearer the epic style of the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata. (c) Many of the ideas contained in these plays are to be seen in the works of Kālidāsa, As'vaghosa, Sūdraka, Viṣṇukhadatta and many others, who owe their indebtedness to the author of them. These and similar facts establish the antiquity of these plays.

Among these thirteen plays, there is one by name SVAPNAVĀSAVADATTA which is ascribed to Bhāsa by Rājasekhara in this stanza of his—

भासनाटकचक्रेऽपि च्छेकैः क्षिसे परिक्षितुम् ।

स्वप्नवासवदत्तस्य दाहकोऽभूत्र पावकः ॥ — सूक्तिसुक्तावली

This coupling of one of the plays with the name of Bhāsa establishes that all the other works too ( claiming common authorship ) must be by Bhāsa, who alone has to his credit a nātaka-cakra.

Bāna observes in his HARSACARITA that 'Bhāsa gained as much fame, by his plays begun by the stage-directors, containing many and varying characters and stirring dramatic episodes, as by (the erection of) temples constructed by architects, with several stories and banners.' The Trivandrum plays have all the above features and hence

2. सूत्रधारकुनारम्भैर्नाटकैर्बहुभूमिकैः ।

सप्ताकैर्यशो लेखे भासो देवकुलैरिव ॥ — Harsacarita.

they must be by Bhāsa. This Bhāsa must be the same as the one owned by Kālidāsa as his predecessor in view of the great antiquity of the plays.

These two views of the Pandit were discussed in learned journals by scholars, both Indian and foreign. The result was that many concurred with the Pandit regarding the common authorship of these plays. As regards the other question there came up three different views; viz.,—

1. All the 13 plays are the works of Bhāsa.
2. None of the 13 plays can be ascribed to Bhāsa.

3. The material available to prove the authorship of the plays is inadequate and hence the evidences adduced so far are not at all conclusive.

Scholars who did not agree with the Pandit pointed out that—

a) The features of Bhāsa's plays mentioned in Bāna's verse are found also in many other South Indian plays and hence cannot be a conclusive proof.

b) None of the plays can be Bhāsa's; for, the SVAPNAVĀSAVADATTA of this group does not contain the following stanza quoted from Bhāsa's play of the same name, by Rāmacandra in his Nātyadarpaṇa—

पादाकान्तानि पुण्याणि सोऽम चेदं शिल्पतलम् ।

नूनं काचिदिहासीना मां हृष्ट्वा सहसा गतः ॥

These two diverse views, viz., of Ganapati Sastri and of those who did not agree with him, naturally led to the third view mentioned above of a few cautious scholars.

Arguments and counter arguments defending their own stand and refuting their opponents' were put forth by the different groups in a series of

articles for a long time. This only made the problem of the authorship more and more complicated.

Thus, to this day, the question of Bhāsa's authorship has not been answered conclusively and hence it has remained an unsolved problem.

### *Date of Bhāsa*

'Bhāsa must be earlier than both Kālidāsa and Bāna who refer to him by name, as observed already, and later than Vālmiki upon whose Rāmāyaṇa he has drawn for the theme of his two dramas, viz., Pratimā and Abhiṣeka. But Kālidāsa's date is still indefinite. Bāna's date, however, is almost definitely known to be the closing part of the 6th and the beginning of the 7th cent. A.D. So Bhāsa's date cannot be later than the 6th cent. A.D. As regards the date of Vālmiki too, scholars differ. Prof. Keith is inclined to think that Vālmiki lived earlier than the 4th cent. B.C. and that those who improved on him were during the period 400-200 B.C., while Prof. Jacobi assigns him to a date earlier than 5th cent. B.C.'

These two limits of Bhāsa's date are almost universally accepted but there has been much diversity in the opinion of scholars regarding the exact date of Bhāsa. Some feel that he should be closer to Kālidāsa, while others feel that he is closer to Vālmiki. The learned editor of Trivandrum has pointed out that Bhāsa must be definitely before Pāṇini and Bharata, as their rules of grammar and dramaturgy are not applicable to his plays. Again Pāṇini's date is not known definitely. Keith places him in the 4th cent. B.C. Accepting this date of Pāṇini, if Bhāsa is prior to him, he will have to be assigned to the 5th cent. B.C. at the latest.

### *Bhasa and Kalidasa*

Bhāsa no doubt has many excellences, but occupies a lower place than Kālidāsa at any rate. The very fact that Bhāsa was superceded by Kālidāsa and that generations of Indian scholars almost forgot Bhāsa, is a proof that he is not the best of Indian poets. The difference lies in the very conception of dramatic literature. To Kālidāsa or Bhavabhūti Rasa is everything. However much Sanskrit dramas may differ in other respects, this unity of Rasa is common to them all. In Bhāsa on the other hand, to speak comparatively, it is lacking. In fact, Bhāsa has greater claims to be compared with dramatists like Shakespeare, who excel in sketching character or constructing plots, more than maintaining unity of Rasa. Kālidāsa's ideal is later and must have taken some time to develop. If we make due allowance for growth, we cannot but assign to Bhāsa a date long anterior to Kālidāsa.

### *Works of Bhasa*

Mention has already been made of the thirteen plays ascribed to Bhāsa. Another play called YAJÑAPHALAM dealing with the story of the Bālakānda of the Rāmāyaṇa has been recently published and attributed to Bhāsa. There seems to be however, a belief that Bhāsa wrote as many as twenty three dramas.

About thirteen stray verses are attributed to Bhāsa. Of them *five* are found in the Sāringadhārapaddhati, *four* in the Subhāsitāvali, *three* in the Saduktikarnāmr̥ta and *one* in the Sūktimuktāvali. None of these verses is found in any of the Bhāsa plays discovered so far. This cannot be a

disproof of Bhāsa's authorship of those plays, for, we may yet hope to discover more works of Bhāsa where these verses may be found.

Bhāsa expresses things directly and in a simple and lucid language. There is something remarkably charming in every statement of his. His humour is subtle and original in appreciation of which Jayadeva called him the gentle smile of the Goddess of Poetry.

Among the above named thirteen plays ascribed to Bhāsa, the *SVAPNAVĀSAVADATTA* which is considered to be the author's masterpiece is, in fact, a continuation of his other play the *PRATIJÑAYAUGANDHARĀYANAM*. The latter is referred to in its prologue as a *Prakarana* by the dramatist, perhaps with the intention of making it a long play of ten acts. This would have been achieved if the *Pratijñā* of four acts and the *Svapna* of six acts were put together. Their theme is the story of Udayana,—his marriage with Vāsavadattā and Padmāvati. The *Pratijñā* is really a drama of political intrigue in which the minister Yaugandharāyana is the central figure, but has the romance of Udayana's love and adventure interwoven with it. Conspicuously enough both Udayana and Vāsavadattā do not make their appearance even once in the course of the play, but a great deal about them is told throughout. The story is briefly this:—Pradyota Mahāsena, king of Ujjain, had a daughter named Vāsavadattā who was to be married. Udayana, king of Vatsa, was a suitable bridegroom for her. But the two kings were not friendly. So Pradyota cleverly trapped Udayana who was proud of his skill in

enrapturing elephants by the music of his *Vīṇā*, by means of an elephant ruse and took him prisoner. This made Yaugandharāyana, the minister of Udayana, take vows to liberate his master from imprisonment in a manner befitting a hero of his status. After some time, Pradyota allowed his daughter to receive lessons in music from the captive Udayana. As a result the two began to love each other deeply. In the meanwhile Yaugandharāyana, putting on several disguises, managed to contact his master in prison and helped him to elope with Vāsavadattā. News of this was received by Pradyota a little too late to overtake them; Yaugandharāyana was somehow captured after a battle. Though captured he was honoured with the presentation of a vase in admiration of his abilities and then set free.

The play is named after the repeated vows of the minister Yaugandharāyana. The dramatic scene in the palace of Mahāsena (II Act) which is so true to life, the amusing interlude of the intoxicated page, and the effective characterisation of Yaugandharāyana go to make the play interesting.

THE *SVAPNAVĀSAVADATTA* depicts the story of Udayana after his marriage with Vāsavadattā. As the king lost some of his territories owing to negligence, being absorbed in his love for Vāsavadattā, Yaugandharāyana adopted a stratagem not only to recover them but also to extend the king's power by bringing about a diplomatic marriage between him and the Magadha princess Padmāvatī. Taking advantage of a short separation of the king from Vāsavadattā, he spread a rumour that she perished in a wild conflagration along with the minister,

while in fact he disguised her as an ordinary lady of Avanti, and entrusted her to the care of Padmāvati. In course of time, Udayana, as he believed that Vāsavadattā was no more, married Padmāvati. One evening when Padmāvati was not well, Udayana went to enquire after her health; but finding that she had not yet come there, reposed on her couch and went to sleep. Vāsavadattā also went there to meet Padmāvati. Not being able to see in the dim light of the room, that it was the king, and not Padmāvati, lying on the couch she sat beside the king; but was able to recognise him soon. The king was then dreaming of Vāsavadattā and uttering her name loudly. At once Vāsavadattā rose up and left the place, lest her stay there be known to the king. The king also woke up, had just a glimpse of Vāsavadattā, but felt that it was all a dream. In the meantime Yaugandharāyana had adopted measures to recover the lost territories with the help of the Magadha king. Restoration of the kingdom was followed by the reunion of the king with Vāsavadattā.

*Svapnavāsavadatta* is a play of fine emotions. The nice dream-scene has given the play its pretty name ‘*Svapna-nātaka*,’ although presenting the scene of the king’s sleep on the stage is objectionable according to conventions.

THE *AVIMĀRAKA*, a play in six acts, depicts the love-adventure of the Sauvira king, who, for the time being had become an outcaste by the curse of a sage. By killing an asura named Avi, he had come to be known as Avimāraka. The princess Kuraṅgi, daughter of Kuntibhoja, fell in love with him when he rescued her from a mad elephant.

As a marriage between them was out of question, Avimāraka being of a low caste, they had to meet stealthily with the contrivance of the maids of the princess. This was soon discovered and Avimāraka, in utter despair, attempted to commit suicide by throwing himself down from a hill. A Vidyādbara saved him and gave him a ring by the power of which he could secretly enjoy the company of his beloved. This again was learnt by Kuntibhoja who felt perplexed. But Nārada intervened, and explained the parentage of Avimāraka who had by then completed the term of the curse, and arranged for the marriage of the loving couple.

THE PRATIMĀ-NĀTAKA, in seven acts, deals with the story of the Rāmāyaṇa beginning with the stopping of Rāma's consecration in the Ayodhyākāṇḍa and ending with his coronation after Rāvana was slain in the Yuddhakāṇḍa. The title of the play is after the original and impressive statue-house scene conceived by the dramatist to serve as a means to make Bharata know of his father's demise. The dramatist has altered the popular story to a considerable extent in order to ennable the character of Bharata, Kaikeyī and Sītā also. Dasaratha's death is represented on the stage which is against conventional rules.

THE ABHISEKANĀTAKA, in six acts, supplies the episodes of the Kiskindhā and Sundara kāṇḍas omitted in the Pratimā and thus begins with the consecration of Sugriva and concludes with that of Rāma, thereby justifying its title. In this play Rāma is identified with Viṣṇu, while in the Pratimā he is only a prince upholding truth and

justice. There is the miracle of divided waters in this play to enable the monkey hosts to cross the ocean.

THE PĀNCARĀTRA is a play in three acts. Although the characters are of the Mahābhārata, the entire plot is Bhāsa's own. With the episode of the *gograhanā* and Abhimanyu's marriage for the frame-work, he introduces a sacrifice performed by Duryodhana at the end of which Drona is requested to name the guru-dakṣinā he would receive from his pupil. Drona who is all along waiting for an opportunity somehow to avoid a fratricidal war between the Kauravas and Pāṇḍavas demands half of the kingdom for the Pāṇḍavas. Duryodhana agrees to give it if news of the Pāṇḍavas who were then in Ajñātavāsa is brought within five nights. Just then a report comes that the Kīcakas are slain by some one in the capital of Virāta. Drona infers that the unknown person who has committed such a deed must be none other than Bhīma and undertakes to get news of the Pāṇḍavas within the stipulated time. Bhīṣma induces Duryodhana to carry off the cattle of Virāta who has insulted him by not attending the sacrifice. A war between the heroes on the sides of Duryodhana and Virāta follows. As a result the Pāṇḍavas are located. Duryodhana, true to his word, gives away half his kingdom.

The play derives its title from the strange 'five days' condition which upsets completely the popular story and introduces a revolutionary change in altogether avoiding the great Mahābhārata war, thereby ennobling the character of Duryodhana beyond bounds. Another remarkable

feature of this play is that it is a manly play, there being no real female character in it. The predominant sentiment is *Vira* which does not dilate on any occasion in the course of the play.

THE MADHYAMAVYĀYOGA, DŪTAVĀKYA, DŪTAGHATOTKACA, KARNABHĀRA and ŪRUBHAṄGA are five one-act plays of Bhāsa. All these are based on the relative episodes found in the Mahābhārata. Of these the Dūtavākyā and Karna-bhāra have no female characters. The Dūtavākyā deals with Kṛṣṇa's mission as an envoy of the Pāṇdavas. It contains no Prākṛt passages. The Karna-bhāra glorifies Karna's giving away his coat of armour and ear-rings to Indra who begged for them in the guise of a Brahmin. The Madhyama-vyāyoga depicts an amusing circumstance which united Bhīma with his son Ghatotkaca. The Dūtaghatotkaca is about Ghatotkaca going as an envoy of Kṛṣṇa to the Kauravas. The Ūrubaṅga describes the breaking of the thigh of Duryodhana by Bhīma during a gadā-yuddha. Duryodhana's pathetic death is represented on the stage in this play against conventional rules.

THE BĀLACARITA, in five acts, deals with Kṛṣṇa's birth and his feats in boyhood. Kṛṣṇa is the seventh child of Vasudeva according to this play. In many other details also the play differs from the story found in the *Harivams'a*, *Viṣṇupurāṇa* and *Bhāgavata*, probably because these purāṇas are later in date than the play itself. The fight between Arīṣṭa and Kṛṣṇa and the deaths of Arīṣṭa and Kamsa are shown on the stage. The third Act presents a scene of the *Hallīs'a* dance.

THE CĀRUDATTA is a fragment in four acts without the initial and final verses. This is considered by some scholars as the source for Sūdraka's Mṛcchakatika. Cārudatta, a merchant impoverished by generosity, falls in love with a courtesan named Vasantasenā. Pursued by the king's brother-in-law, Samsthānaka, Vasantasenā takes refuge in Cārudatta's house and leaves her gold ornaments to his care. In the night the ornaments are stolen by a thief Sajjalaka in order to purchase thereby the freedom of a slave girl of Vasantasenā with whom he was in love. In the morning, finding that the deposited ornaments have been stolen, Cārudatta sends the necklace of his own wife to the courtesan in lieu of the lost ones. Vasantasenā, who has come to know of the theft already, accepts it to have an excuse to meet Cārudatta once again; and having given away the slave girl to Sajjalaka, goes to meet Cārudatta. Here the play stops abruptly. The DARIDRACĀRUDATTA mentioned by Abhinavagupta is probably the same as this play of Bhāsa.

## 2. SŪDRAKA (2nd cent. A.D.?)

THE MṛCCHAKATIKA, a prakarana in ten acts by Sūdraka, was usually placed at the head of the existing dramas, but the publication of Bhāsa's Cārudatta unsettled the question of its antiquity. Indeed the fact that Kālidāsa, in referring to his literary predecessors, does not make any mention of the author of this play seems to tell against its antiquity. But Vāmana of the eighth cent. A.D. quotes from it; so it might have been in existence about 700 A.D. According to the prologue the author Sūdraka was a king; but he has not been

identified with any historical personage. The prologue also mentions that the royal author, when he was one hundred years and ten days old, installed his son on the throne and died by entering fire. Obviously all this must be an interpolation. Wilson assigns Sūdraka to the 2nd cent. A.D. on the basis of the *Skanda-purāṇa* according to which Sūdraka was the first of the Āndhrabhr̥tyas. Pischel has attempted to identify Sūdraka with Dandin without adequate reasons.

The story of the first four acts of Sūdraka's *Mṛcchakatika* is identical with that of Bhāsa's *Cārudatta*. This has made some scholars think that six acts were written newly and added on to the existing four acts of Bhāsa's play and that the whole play, re-named as *Mṛcchākatika*, was passed off under the authorship of king Sūdraka of a legendary fame.

The play depicts the love of Cārudatta, a poor Brahmin youth, and Vasantasenā, a courtezan. The incident of Vasantasenā filling up with her jewels the toy cart made of clay of her lover's son, which led to Cārudatta's being sentenced to death on the alleged charge of murdering Vasantasenā to knock off her jewels, has given the play its significant title *Mṛt-s'akatikam*. There are as many as thirty characters in the play, each of whom has an individuality of his own. The S'akāra provokes laughter with his queer talks, mispronouncing S (ष) and S (ষ) as S (ষ) invariably. The play abounds in Prākṛt passages and verses. The author shows a keen sense of humour. The interest of the action is well sustained through-out. Characterisation is uniformly effective, descriptions are most graphic,

and plot construction is quite skilful. Wilson has remarked that this is the most Shakespearean play in Sanskrit. It presents the scenes of sleep and strangulation on the stage.

Another play named **PADMAPRĀBHRTAKA** is also ascribed to Śūdraka. It is a **Bhāṇa** depicting the love of Devadattā and Mūladeva, the authority of the thieves.

There are three other **Bhāṇas** which have to be assigned to the early part of the Christian Era. One of them is the **UBHAYĀBHISĀRIKĀ** ascribed to Vararuci who is perhaps the same as the one mentioned by Patañjali as a poet. This **Bhāṇa** depicts the love of Kuberadatta for two women. It refers to the tenets of the Sāṅkhya and Vaisēṣika systems and to the art of dance. Another is the **DHŪRTAVITASAMVĀDA** of Īśvaradatta, which depicts the ways of courtezans. The third is **PĀDATĀDITAKA** said to have been written by S'yāmilaka. It is an amusing **Bhāṇa** showing a Brahmin consulting different persons about the means of expiation for having been kicked on his head by a courtezan, and being advised to get kicked by the same woman with her other foot also.

### 3. AS'VAGHOṢA (*See page 64 f.*)

Some years ago fragments of palm-leaf manuscripts of great antiquity were discovered at Turfan by Prof. Luders bringing to light three Buddhist dramas. One of them, the **SĀRIPUTRAPRAKARĀNA** or more fully **SĀRADVATIPUTRAPRAKARĀNA** has been recorded in its colophon as written by As'vaghoṣa. It deals with the conversion of Sāriputra and Maudgalyāyana into Buddhism, in nine

acts. The play strictly adheres to all the canons of dramaturgy. The manuscript containing this play contains fragments of two other plays which also are probably by As'vaghosa himself. One of them is allegorical, while the other has a hataera Magadbavati by name, a nāyaka, a duṣṭa, a maid-servant and Sāriputra and Maudgalyāyana among its characters. The titles of these plays are not known. The latter play is clearly intended for the purpose of religious edification.

#### 4. KĀLIDĀSA (*See pages 68 f. & 153 f.*)

In Kālidāsa the dramatic art attained perfection in India. From him we have three well constructed plays, viz., Mālavikāgnimitram, Vikramorvasīyam and Abhijñāna-sākuntalam. The nature of the work Kunteśvaradautyam attributed to him is not clear as it is known only through a quotation by Kṣemendra in his Aucityavicāracarcā.

THE MĀLAVIKĀGNIMITRAM representing court-life is obviously the first play written by him and is undoubtedly inferior to the other two. It is a romantic comedy in five acts, dealing with the love of king Agnimitra for Mālavikā, who although for the time being is a servant-maid of the chief queen Dhārini, is in reality a princess already betrothed to the king. The theme of the play is the poet's own although he has used some historical persons the chief of whom are Puṣpamitra, Agnimitra and Vasumitra of the Sunga dynasty founded by Puṣpamitra (185 B.C. to 73 B.C.). Thus the plot of the play has a historical back-ground.

The play written next by Kālidāsa is his VIKRAMORVASĪYAM which is brought under the

*trotaka* type of *uparupakas* by rhetoricians. It depicts in five acts the love of king Purūravas for Urvasi, the celestial nymph. Although the theme is based on existing mythological accounts, it has been handled very skilfully by the dramatist by introducing several changes. The fourth act is a lyrical monologue of Purūravas who goes on searching for the lost Urvasi in the mountain regions.

The text of this play has come down to us in two recensions. The one commented on by Rānganātha has a number of Prākṛt passages in Act IV. The hero is made to speak in Prākṛt and then in Samskr̥t which is incredulous however mad he may be. These passages must therefore be later interpolations.

THE *ABHIJĀNASĀKUNTALAM* is Kālidāsa's master-piece. In seven acts it depicts in an excellent manner the love-story of king Duṣyanta and the sage-girl S'akuntalā. The S'akuntalopākhyāna of the *Mahābhārata*, on which the theme of the play is based, has been retold here in an original manner introducing several changes such as the episode of Durvāsas for instance. The fourth act of the drama is generally considered to be the most charming in the whole play and even there four stanzas ( IV 6, 9, 17 and 18 ) are considered the best. Cf.—

काव्येषु नाटकं रम्यं तत्र रम्या शकुन्तला ।

तत्रापि च चतुर्थोऽङ्कः तत्र श्लोकचतुष्टयम् ॥

But Act V is regarded as more charming than Act IV by some. Cf.—

शकुन्तलचतुर्थोऽङ्कः सर्वोत्कृष्ट इति प्रथा ।

न सर्वसम्मता यस्मात्पञ्चमोऽस्ति ततोऽधिकः ॥

“Sweetest Sakuntala” was the delight of the great critic and poet Goethe. So much was he enraptured by the poetic genius of Kālidāsa that he said of Sākuntala —

“Wouldst thou, the young year's blossoms  
and the fruits of its decline  
And all by which the soul is charmed,  
enraptured, feasted, fed ?  
Wouldst thou the earth and heaven itself  
in one sole name combine ?  
I name thee O Sakuntala !  
and all at once is said.”

The prevailing sentiment in every one of the three dramas of Kālidāsa is Sringāra which implies that the poet was clearly partial towards it. From this we may regard him as pre-eminently a poet of love; but love may be of various kinds, for example, love between mother and her child, that between friends, that between the devotee and god, and love between husband and wife. All these varieties of love excepting the last are comparatively easy to handle in a work of art, for, the element of spirituality or unselfishness is inherent in them. But in the last kind of love to which alone the term Sringāra is applied, we find a spiritual as well as a classical element. Consequently if this passion is unskilfully handled by the poet, his poetry will become sensual and vulgar and it will therefore be a means of degrading instead of elevating us. It is this which makes the delineation of Sringāra particularly difficult. There are however two stages of it; love of a mature kind between persons that have undergone the chastening influence of life and that between those that are young and

full-blooded. In the former the risks of handling love wrongly are fewer, as for example in the *Uttararāmacarita*. Kālidāsa prefers to tell us of the latter. He chooses what is more difficult and achieves complete success there. Although he elects to portray love between youthful persons, he carefully suppresses the sensual element in it and gives prominence to the spiritual side of it. This is the meaning of the common statement that Kālidāsa's *Sṛṅgāra* is not 'Vivrta' but 'Samvṛta'. That is his special excellence. -

The depiction of the natural and gradual development of the love at first sight of the youthful Duṣyanta and Śakuntalā has been ably handled by Kālidāsa in his *Abhijñānasākuntalam*. The first love of the two lovers, though pure, was naturally enough tumultuous, sensuous, material and somewhat selfish also. Suffering and repentance which had a curing effect, as it were, slowly transformed it into an everlasting, unselfish spiritual love, not of the minds or the physical bodies, but of the never dying souls. It is no wonder that the remarkable success Kālidāsa achieved in the depiction of such an ideal and true love between husband and wife crowned him with eternal glory.

## CHAPTER XII

### POST KĀLIDĀSAN DRAMATISTS

There are some short plays of uncertain date and authorship, which however bear traces of belonging to a fairly early period of the Christian Era. The *BHAGAVADAJJUKĀYĀ*, for instance, is attributed to a saint named Bodhāyana who has not been identified. As the style of the play is simple, as the names of the ten types of dramas given in this work differ from the commonly accepted ones, and also because of the antiquarian forms of the Prākṛt used, it is thought to have been an old play. Mention of this play is made in an inscription dated 610 A.D. of Mahendravikramavarman, king of Kāñci. The play is full of humour consequent upon the inter-change of bodies between an ascetic Bhagavān and a courtezan named Ajjukā, under very strange circumstances.

THE *VĪÑĀVĀSĀVADATTA*, also called *VATSA-RĀJACARITA* and available only upto the middle of the fourth act, is of unknown authorship and date. It depicts the love of Vatsarāja and Vāsavadattā. The *Vīñā* called Ghosavatī of Vatsarāja plays an important role in the development of the plot and that accounts for its title. The play bears a close resemblance to Bhāsa's *Pratijñā-yaugandharāyā* both in style and matter.

THE *DĀMAKA-PRAHASANA* is a short funny play, the chief role wherein is that of the *Vidūṣaka* Dāmaka, a friend of Karna who, by concealing his ksatriya descent, learnt the science of archery from Parashurāma.

## DINNĀGA (2nd- 5th cent. A.D.)

THE KUNDAMĀLA, a play in six acts, dealing with the story of the Uttararāmāyaṇa is by Dinnāga, also called Dhīra-nāga. He cannot be the same as the Buddhist logician Dinnāga. The theme is not very much different from the story of the Uttarakāṇḍa of the Rāmāyaṇa but for some significant changes. Vināyaka and Sīva are praised in the Nāndī. The play derives its title from the Kunda-mālā—garland of jasmine flowers —wreathed and offered to Gaṅgā in worship by Sītā, which on being found fills Rāma with the hope of getting reunited with his abandoned wife. The introduction of the Vidūsaka into this Rāmāyaṇa play is somewhat strange. The simple and graceful style of Dinnāga takes him very near to Kālidāsa than to Bhavabhūti who has been considerably influenced by this dramatist, as can be seen from his Uttararāmacarita. The play is assigned to the period between the second and fifth centuries. A.D.

## MAHENDRAVIKRAMAVARMAN (7th cent. A.D.)

The MATTAVILĀSA-PRAHASANA is an amusing farce by the South Indian Pallava king Mahendra-vikramavarman I (600-630 A.D.), who ruled in Kāñcī. It depicts and makes fun of the degraded life led by some adherents of the Kāpālika and Pāśupata sects of Saivism and also the Buddhist monks, under the garb of piety. Quotations from this play are found in the later works on Alāṅkāra. The play refers to the story of Bhāravi's Kirātārjunīya and to a manual for thieves by Karpata.

## VISĀKHADATTA (5th-9th cent. A.D.)

THE *MUDRĀRĀKSASA* is a play in seven acts by Visākhadatta also known as Visākhadeva who was the son of Mahārāja Bhāskaradatta and grandson of the feudatory prince Vatesvaradatta. It deals with a political plot relating to the history of Magadha. It derives its title from the signet ring of Rāksasa, the former minister of the Nandas, by employing which the tactful Cāṇakya cornered Rāksasa into a situation where he had no alternative but to accept to be the minister of Candragupta thereafter.

As a piece of art, the *Mudrārāksasa* is noted for its 'unity in variety, entire subordination of the individual factors to one idea and plan, and the harmonious co-operation of the parts to one crowning effect'. The subject matter of the play, which is purely political, having no scope at all for the depiction of either the tender feelings of the human heart or the heroism pregnant with feelings of vengeance, takes us into an atmosphere entirely different from the one which is common to most of the Sanskrit plays. The admirable success of Visākhadatta in the construction and presentation of the plot, and in making his play a vigorous one full of interest and dramatic force from beginning to end has secured for him a distinguished place in the top ranks of Sanskrit dramatists.

The manliness of the play with the almost complete absence of female characters, the most skilful character-delineation, and a style calculated to the nature of the subject matter are some of the

features of the drāma which can never fail to win the appreciation of the readers.

*His date*— The date of Visākhadatta has been only conjectural. He is assigned to different dates between the 5th and 9th cent. A.D. by different scholars. There can however be no doubt regarding the lower limit of his date, viz., 9th cent. A.D., as the *Dasarūpaka* of *Dhananjaya* (10th cent. A.D.) refers to the *Mudrārāksasa* by name in three different places citing illustrations therefrom. The *Sarasvatīkāñthābharaṇa* of *Bhoja* (10th cent. A.D.) also quotes two verses from the play. The *Bharata-vākyā* of the *Mudrārāksasa* with पार्थिवचन्द्रगुप्तः has made some scholars think that this *Candragupta* must be one of the gupta emperors of the 5th cent. A.D., and not the Mauryan king. Available quotations from the *Devīcandragupta*, another work ascribed to Visākhadatta, support this view. But the reading (पार्थिवः) चन्द्रगुप्तः is not found in all MSS. There are three variants *Dantivarmā*, *Rantivarmā* and *Avantivarmā*. A *Pallava* king (c. 800 A.D.), a *Lāta* king (c. 850 A.D.) and a *Rashtrakuta* king (c. 900 A.D.) with the same name of *Dantivarmā* are known to history, but there is no evidence supporting Visākhadatta's connection with any of them. The reading 'Rantivarmā' is rejected as it makes no sense. 'Avantivarmā' was the *Maukhāti* king who was the father-in-law of *Rājyasi*, sister of *Harsavardhana* of Kanoj. This would place Visākhadatta in the neighbourhood of 600 A.D.

*His works*— *MUDRĀRĀKSASA* is the only play that has come down in full to us as the work of Visākhadatta. It is believed that he must have

dramatised the story of Rāma, on the basis of the following single stanza attributed to him in the *Saduktikarnāmrta*. The stanza is addressed probably by Vibhīṣaṇa to Rāvaṇa in the supposed play.

रामोऽसौ भुवनेषु विक्रमगुणैर्यातः प्रसिद्धिं परा-  
मस्त्राभ्यविपर्ययाद् यदि परं देवो न जानाति तम् ।  
वन्दीवैष यशांसि गायति मरुद् यस्यैकवाणाहति-  
श्रेणीभूतविशालनासविवरोद्धीर्णः स्वैरः सतभिः ॥

The *Subhāṣitāvalī* gives the following two anuṣṭup verses, ascribing them to Visākhadeva, whom Dr. Peterson identifies with the author of the *Mudrārāksasa*.

तत्त्रिविष्टपमाख्यातं तन्वङ्गथा यद्वित्रयम् ।  
येनानिमिषहष्टित्वं नृणामप्युपजायते ॥  
सेन्द्रचापैः श्रिता मेषैर्निपत्निर्जिरा नगः ।  
वर्णकम्बलसंवती बभुर्मत्ता द्विपा इव ॥

—Subhāṣitāvalī 1548 & 1728

A work called *Devīcandragupta* has been quoted from, ascribing it to Visākhadeva, by Rāmacandra and Gunacandra. It is believed to be a play in not less than five acts. This work has been referred to by Bhoja in his *Sringāraprakāśa* and also by Abhinavagupta in his commentary on Bharata's *Nātyasāstra*.

Another work called *Abhisārikāvāñcītaka* or *Abhisārikābandhitaka* has been ascribed to Visākhadeva, and also quoted from by both Bhoja and Abhinavagupta.

## S'RĪ HARSA (7th cent. A.D.)

THE NĀGĀNANDA, the RATNĀVALĪ, and the PRIYADARS'IKĀ are the three plays written by S'rī Harṣa or Harṣadeva, generally known as Harṣavardhana who ruled at Sthānviśvara between 606 and 648 A.D. The authorship of these plays were once being ascribed to Bāṇa and Dhāvaka on flimsy grounds. The Chinese traveller It'sing has mentioned the Nāgānanda as Harṣa's work and Bāṇa himself refers to Harṣa, who was his patron, as a gifted poet. Harṣa was the patron also of many other poets such as Mayūra and Mataṅgadivākara.

THE NĀGĀNANDA is a nātaka in five acts. The two nāndī stanzas are addressed to the Buddha. The first two acts of the play deal with the hero Jimūtavāhana and the heroine Malayavati falling in love with each other at first sight and their marriage after their suffering the pangs of separation for some time. The third act is devoted to the mirthful rejoicings of all, from the servants of the palace upto the newly wedded couple. When the marriage week is hardly over, the hero is led, in the fourth Act, to offer his own body to Garuda in order to save a Nāga who is designated as food to Garuda for that day. In the fifth Act the hero gladly allows himself to be devoured by Garuda who tears his body with his sharp claws and beak, and feasts on his flesh for some time. But soon he comes to learn that the person thus injured by him is not a Nāga, but is the Vidyādhara prince Jimūtavāhana. Thus he begins to relent, begs the pardon of the hero and is advised by him to take up the vow of *Ahimsa*. The hero dies in a

short while, but is restored to life by Goddess *Gauri* and is blessed by her with several honours. In the meantime, Garuda causes a shower of *Amṛta* from heaven and thereby brings about an unexpected and wholesale revival of all the snakes slain by him till then. He allows them to rejoice freely. The play thus concludes happily, meriting its title *Nāgānanda*—Joy of the serpents.

The play is unique in several respects. There is in it a happy blending of the Hindu and Buddhistic influences. On the one hand, the *Nāndī* *slokas* invoke the Buddha; the hero is a Buddhist in his sympathies, although he is in Āryan surroundings; and the story itself upholds the Buddhistic ideals of life,—viz., self-denial and self-sacrificing benevolence. On the other hand, the parents of the hero live as *vānaprasthas* in a forest and observe Āryan rites; the heroine is a staunch devotee of *Gauri*; and the hero himself is restored to life by her. Almost all the *rasas* are depicted in this play. The dominant *'rasa* in the play is the *Dayāvīra*. The subsidiary sentiment is *S'ringāra* brought out, rather elaborately, in the first three Acts. *Hāsyā* *rasa* is also depicted at the beginning of the third Act, to serve as a subsidiary sentiment to *S'ringāra*. The introduction of this *Hāsyā* in the said comic scene serves also as a relieving link between the two serious sections of the play, viz., the first two Acts depicting the love and the marriage of the hero and the heroine, and the last two Acts devoted to depict the self-sacrificing

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1. According to the *Dhvanyāloka* school of Ālaṅkārikas the dominant *rasa* in this play is *Sānta*.

benevolence of the hero. Other *rasas* such as Bhibhatsa, Raudrā and Karuṇa, can be seen in the scenes describing the cemetery, the advent of Garuda and the lamentations of the parents and wife of the hero and the mother of Sāṅkhācūḍa. Adbhuta can be noticed in the appearance of the goddess Gaurī. It is a play of considerable merit, the characters having been drawn very well. The humorous element introduced is of a very high order. As per the account of It'sing who saw the Nāgānanda performed at Kanoj, the play pleased the gifted monarch so much that he himself set it to music.

THE RATNĀVALĪ is a nātikā in four Acts dealing with the story of the Simhala princess Ratnāvali who, under the name of Sāgarikā, was living as an attendant of Vāsavadattā owing to the force of circumstances, and her marriage with king Udayana of Kausāmbī. The play is modelled upon the Mālavikāgnimitram of Kālidāsa. The name of the heroine and her being recognised by her gem-necklace (RATNĀVALĪ) give the play its title. The original and charming episode of the Aindrajālika makes the play very interesting.

THE PRIYADARSIKĀ is also a nātikā in four Acts and deals with a similar love affair of Udayana. The heroine Priyadarsikā of this play is also a princess, but, being a war-captive, lives under the name of Āranyikā as an attendant of queen Vāsavadattā. Sāṅkṛtyāyani, an aged friend of the queen, and the Vidūṣaka help the king in his love affair. Vāsavadattā's marriage with Udayana is enacted as a play before Vāsavadattā

herself. Āranyikā puts on the role of the queen and the king plays his own part by a trick. Vāsavadattā, on coming to know of this, is enraged and imprisons Āranyikā. In her despair Āranyikā poisons herself and is brought to Udayana who alone can cure her. The chamberlain of the queen's aunt's husband is by chance there at that time and recognises Āranyikā as his master's daughter Priyadarsikā. Udayana, by his magic art, brings her back to consciousness and Vāsavadattā agrees to the king's marrying her who is now known to be her own cousin.

The originality of Harṣa in these two pretty plays is not perhaps great, but the plot construction in both has been quite effective. The staging of a play within a play in the *Priyadarsikā* which is an original thought of the poet, is a remarkable feature of that play.

*Sri Harsha and Kalidasa*—As compared with other poets, S'rī Harṣa exhibits some special characteristics which enable us to conclude, even if his date were not otherwise known, that he marks the transition from Kālidāsa to Bhavabhūti. First, Sri Harṣa lacks the elevation or dignity characteristic of Kālidāsa, but we do not yet find in him developed the learned extravagance of the later writers not excluding Bhavabhūti. In point of elegance and simplicity of language, in taste and in refinement, Harṣa is second to none. Secondly, in Kālidāsa's dramas, excepting Mālavikāgnimitram, we generally move in a half divine region and breathe a spiritual atmosphere. His chief characters like Kaṇva and Sākuntalā are really super-men and super-women. In the later dramas

we no doubt find characters nearer average humanity, but their picture is over-drawn and shows some unnatural features on earth. In Śrī Harṣa, on the other hand, we find none but common men and women. They certainly betray the influence of the court, especially in the two comedies, but that only makes them more human. In Kālidāsa it is the evolution of a soul that is depicted, but in Śrī Harṣa it is common life that is represented. One might say from this that the material of Harṣa's dramas is really fit material for a drama. Lastly it might be conceded that Harṣa does not possess the poetic imagination of Kālidāsa or Bhavabhūti, but the situations he invents are eminently appropriate in a drama. Thus on the whole, we may characterise Śrī Harṣa as less of a poet or a pandit than other Indian writers; but he is, on that very account, a genuine dramatist. He was probably the first to compose comedies, tragi-comedies of real life with average human characters. His plays are eminently fitted for the stage and even of manageable length as compared with Sākuntala and Uttararāmacarita.

### BHATTANĀRĀYANA (c. 700 A.D.)

THE VENĪSAMHĀRA, a play in six acts, is the only work of Bhattanārāyana. Mṛgarājalakṣmā is his sur-name. / His date is not definitely known. He is cited by Ānandavardhana of the 9th cent. A.D. and Vāmana of the 8th century A.D. Bāṇa does not mention his name among his predecessors. Therefore it is held that he must be after Bāṇa and before Vāmana. This gives him the approximate date of 700 A.D. According to a traditional

account, king Ādisūra of Bengal (7th cent.) invited Bhattanārāyāna to Bengal to perform a sacrifice that would avert famine.

The Plot of the *Venisamhāra* is taken from the *Mahābhārata*. Bhīma's braiding the hair of Draupadī with his own blood-stained hands after slaying Duryodhana in the 'gadā-yuddha' gives the play its title. Draupadī appears in the first act with her hair unbraided and she continues to be so till about the time of the final fall of the curtain. There are, of course, many situations invented by the poet such as the meeting of Draupadi and Bhīma in the first act, or the Nakula episode in the second, as a help in the development of the *Rasa*. The poet throughout uses *S'lesa* and word play as a means of advancing the plot and suggesting the trend of events, so that more than once we have it illustrated that coming events cast their shadows before.

The characters are very graphically drawn and Bhattanārāyāna's excellence here should be considered as more than the ordinary; for, Indian dramatists in their eagerness to develop *Rasa* generally subordinate to it the portrayal of character. Each of the important persons brought on the stage has his or her own individuality which impresses itself indelibly on our mind. Bhīma is bold though vindictive and somewhat offensive. He is boastful and irresistible but his confidence in himself is justified; for he, unlike Duryodhana, is all that he professes to be. What he lacks most is refinement of feeling; and the possible excuse for it, namely the brutal insult of Draupadī, is not adequate to pardon him for it. Duryodhana

resembles him much. He is equally rough, but is more cunning. While Bhīma may be described as proud, Duryodhana is vain, for, he grossly exaggerates his ability. He gloats over his evil-deed, viz., the treatment he permitted to be given to Draupadī. In his own opinion Duryodhana appears both wise and great but his behaviour shows him to be petty, thoughtless and even stupid. He is utterly wanting in the nobility of character which ought to be in an emperor like him. Karna is heroic and stands out against the well balanced Arjuna. The Kaurava heroes, as a rule, are represented here as being worse than in the Mahābhārata. This applies to Karna as well. He shows here none of the magnanimity commonly associated with him. He poisons the mind of Duryodhana, the motive being selfishness or personal prejudice. His attitude towards Asvatthāman who has but recently suffered from a cruel bereavement and the broil that ensues between them is not creditable either to them or to Duryodhana who is present there as their supposed master. Of the two, Asvatthāma, it may be said, behaves more strangely, for, he is there to lose; but even he does not hesitate to put personal considerations above those of the cause which it is his chosen duty to defend. All the characters exhibit some feature of violence or other, not excluding Arjuna and Draupadī. Yudhishthira alone acts like a perfect gentleman, calm, gallant, true to his word, and even ready to sacrifice his private interests to the common good.

The prevalent Rāsa is Vira which in some measure explains the roughness and violence

characteristic of the piece as compared with the generality of the Indian dramas. Other *Rasas* come in as subsidiary. One of the most important of these is the *Sānta-rasa* based upon *Nirveda*, which is the opposite of *Utsāha*, the basis of *Vīra*.

A curious point to be noted is *Kṛṣṇa*'s saying "Evamastu" after the usual *Bharatavākya* which is uttered by *Yudhiṣṭhīra* here. This only shows the author's partiality for the *Kṛṣṇa* cult.

*Bhāttanārāyaṇa* follows the rules of dramaturgy rather slavishly. This has evoked criticism. The *Sāhityadarpaṇa*, for instance, condemns the love scene in the second act as inappropriate. Again the element of horror is too much in the play. The work is conspicuously lacking in the fine feeling and gentle touches of *Kālidāsa* and the rich poetic fancy of *Bāṇa*. But the style is simple and clear, powerful and dignified. Long compounds and a succession of harsh sounds are used here and there, only because of the *Rasa* chosen to be developed. A particular excellence of *Bhāttanārāyaṇa* is the adaptation of sound to sense.

### BHAVABHŪTI (7th cent. A.D.)

THE *MĀLATĪMADHAVA*, *MAHĀVĪRACARITA*, and *UTTARARĀMĀCARITA* are three plays written by *Bhavabhūti*. In the prologues of these plays, *Bhavabhūti* gives us some details about himself. He was a Brahmin of the *Kas'yapa* gotra. His

2. This deviation from the common practice is found in one of *As'vaghoṣa*'s fragments which ends with the words of Buddha.

parents were Nilakantha and Jatukarnī. His own original name was Śrīkantha, Bhavabhūti is the title he got out of his devotion to Siva. He was well versed in various lores. He was a native of Padmapura in the Vidarbha country and passed his literary life chiefly at the court of Yasovarman of Kanoj who reigned in the latter part of the 7th cent. A.D. Bāna's silence regarding Bhavabhūti shows that Bhavabhūti must have been later than Bāna in date.

THE MAHĀVĪRACARITAM, in seven acts, is considered to be the first written play of Bhavabhūti. It deals with the story of Rāma from his marriage with Sītā upto his consecration, introducing several significant changes to present the story as 'the feud of Rāvana and his plots to ruin Rāma'. Rāvana is a suitor of Sītā seeking her hand by sending an envoy to Janaka. When she is married to Rāma, he is disappointed and makes up his mind to take revenge on him. Mālyavān, the minister of Rāvana, instigates Sūrpanakhā to appear in the disguise of Mantharā, the servant-maid of Kaikeyi, and upset the plan of Rāma's coronation by getting Rāma exiled to the forest. It is again Mālyavān who sets up Vālin against Rāma when he steps into Kiśkindhā.

It is said that Bhavabhūti wrote this play only upto stanza 46 in Act IV and that it was continued and finished by one Subrahmanya.

THE MĀLATĪMĀDHAVA is a *Prakarana* in ten acts abounding in stirring incidents. It deals with the love-story of Mālatī, daughter of the minister of Ujjain, and Mādhava, a young student

studying at Ujjain and son of the minister of Vidarbha. Kāmandakī, who was a school-mate of the parents of the lovers. is now a nun. With her help the lovers meet frequently. But the king desires that Mālatī should marry a favourite of his, Nandana by name, whom she does not like. In order to win the king's favour, Mālatī's father decides to give her in marriage to Nandana and fixes up a date for the marriage. Mādhava, in his despair, goes to the cemetery to win the favour of the ghosts by an offering of his own flesh. There he hears cries from a nearby temple and rushes just in time to save Mālatī whom the witch Kapālakundalā and her teacher Aghoraghānta are about to offer in sacrifice to the goddess Cāmundā. Mādhava slays Aghoraghānta and rescues Mālatī. Kapālakundala swears revenge and disappears. The missing Mālatī is searched for and taken home. Side by side with this, another love-affair between Madayantikā, sister of Nandana, and Makaranda, a friend of Mādhava, is under development. Once when they meet in a temple of S'iva, Madayantikā is almost attacked by an escaped tiger, but is rescued by Makaranda. Since then they are deeply in love. The marriage of Mālatī and Nandana as originally fixed has to take place. But by a clever contrivance with the help of Kāmandakī, Mālatī and Mādhava elope together leaving Makaranda to impersonate as Mālatī. After the marriage, Nandana is repulsed by his bride. When his sister Madayantikā goes to rebuke her sister-in-law, she recognises her lover and elopes. Mālatī is once again carried away by Kapālakundalā, and Mādhava searches for her in

vain. It is by a good fortune that *Saudāminī*, a pupil of *Kāmandaki*, comes upon *Kapālakundalā* and rescues *Mālati*. The lovers are reunited and the king approves of their marriage.

THE *UTTARA-RĀMACARITA* depicts in seven acts the later story of *Rāma*. It begins with the banishment of *Sītā*, who is *enciente*, sometime after *Rāma*'s coronation and ends with her restoration. *Rāma* and *Sītā* have just looked into a number of paintings depicting several events of their earlier life; and *Sītā*, wearied, is asleep. *Rāma* hears from his spy that people doubt *Sītā*'s chastity and talk ill even of him as he had accepted *Sītā* after her stay in *Rāvana*'s abode. Thereupon *Rāma* banishes *Sītā*. In the forest, *Sītā* would have killed herself, 'but *Gangā* preserved her, and entrusted her two sons, born in her sorrow, to *Vālmiki* to train. Then *Sītā* permitted by *Gangā*, visits the *Dandaka* forest in a form invisible to mortals and finds *Rāma* also there. 'At the sight of the scene of their early love, both faint, but *Sītā*, recovering, touches unseen *Rāma* who recovers only to faint again' as he feels her tonch, hears her voice but sees her not. Then comes up the episode of the sacrificial horse of *Rāma* leading to a conflict between *Lava* and *Bharata*'s son *Candraketu*. *Rāma* arrives and interrupts the conflict. *Kus'a* also comes from *Bharata*'s hermitage 'whither he has carried *Vālmiki*'s poem to be dramatised'. *Rāma* admires both *Lava* and *Kus'a*, who are his own sons, though he does not know it. All of them proceed to witness a 'dramatic entertainment arranged in the hermitage of *Vālmiki*. *Rāma* is among the audience. The *Apsarases* enact a play

directed by Bharata, depicting Sītā's fortunes after her abandonment. "...she (Sītā) weeps and casts herself in the Bhāgīrathi; she reappears, supported by Pr̥thvī, the earth goddess, and Gaṅgā, each carrying a new-born infant. Pr̥thvī declaims against the harshness of Rāma, Gaṅgā excuses his acts; both ask Sītā to care for the children until they are old enough to hand over to Vālmīki, when she can act as she pleases. Rama is carried away, he believes the scene real, now he intervenes in the dialogue, now he faints. Arundhati suddenly appears with Sītā, who goes to her husband and brings him back to consciousness. The people acclaim the queen, and Vālmīki presents to them Rāma's sons, Kusa and Lava." (Keith, Op. cit., p. 192)

All the three plays of Bhavabhūti were staged during the festival of Kālapriyanātha in Ujjain. The dominating sentiment in the Mahāvīracarita is heroism, in the Mālatīmādhava it is love, and in the Uttararāmacarita it is pathos. In the depiction of pathos<sup>3</sup> in this last play, Bhavabhūti is considered to have excelled Kālidāsa. The play certainly contains many fine poetic passages of genuine pathos, but is somewhat lacking in action. That is why it is characterised as '*rather a dramatic poem than a play*'. Bhavabhūti ranks high as a lyric poet but he seems to be inferior to Kālidāsa in dramatic art. For one thing, there is no humour in Bhavabhūti. While Kālidāsa delights in depicting the gentler feelings and tender emotions of the human heart, Bhavabhūti finds a peculiar attraction in the sterner and more

3. कारुण्यं भवभूतिरेव तनुते । also उत्तरे रामचरिते भवभूतिविशिष्यते ॥

imposing aspects of nature and human character. Though polished and felicitous, his language is somewhat elaborate and artificial. It is not however deformed by extravagant refinement as is too often the case in still later poets. Dhanapāla pays a compliment in his *Tilakamañjari* (Intro. V. 30) to his mastery over the language—

स्पष्टभावरसा चित्रैः पदन्यासैः प्रवर्तिता ।  
नाटकेषु नटस्त्रीव भारती भवभूतिना ॥

YASOVARMAN, the patron of Bhavabhūti, Vākpati and others, wrote the play RĀMĀBHYUDAYA in six acts depicting the story of Rāma. The work is not available now and is known only from quotations in the works of rhetoricians.

### S'AKTIBHADRA (7th cent. A.D.)

THE ĀŚCARYACŪDĀMANI is a drama in seven acts by Sāktibhadra of Malabar, who is known to have been a pupil of Sāṅkarācārya (632-664 A.D.) The author is therefore placed in the 7th cent. The prologue of the play declares that it is the first play written in South India. It betrays many of the features of the plays ascribed to Bhāsa. It deals with the story of Rāma, with considerable changes in the popular version. Rāvaṇa creates fictitious Rāma, Sītā and Lakṣmaṇa and tries to deceive the real ones through them. But, with the help of a miraculous crest-gem (Cūdāmani) and a magic ring given by the hermits, Rāma and Sītā are able to discover them and save themselves. The play derives its title from this wonderful Cūdāmani. The Adbhuta Rasa is depicted well in the play. The prologue reveals that Sāktibhadra

is the author of another drama **UNMĀDA-VĀSAVADATTA** which is not yet discovered.

### PREDECESSORS OF MURĀRI

ANAṄGAHARŚA MĀTRARĀJA wrote the play **TĀPASAVATSARĀJA** in six acts. Its theme is a variation of the ruse of Yaugandharāyana to secure Udayana's marriage with Padmāvati. In this drama Udayana turns an ascetic after hearing that his beloved wife Vāsavadattā died in the forest conflagration, but even then, being unable to control his grief, goes to throw himself into the river at Prayāga. By coincidence Vāsavadattā too goes there for the same purpose. The lovers meet and are reunited. This dramatist is referred to by Dāmodaragupta (c. 770 A.D.), author of the **Kuttinīmata**, and Murāri, author of the **Anargharāghava**. Further, he has been considerably influenced by Harsa's **Ratnāvali**. So he may be placed about 700 A.D.

MĀYURĀJA wrote a play **UDĀTTARĀGHAVA** which is known only by citations. Rājasēkhara refers to him and Dhanika cites him more than once in his commentary on the **Dasarūpaka**. Dhanika reveals two other dramas, viz., the **CHALITARĀMA** and the **PĀNDAVĀNANDA**, which perhaps belong to this very period.

### MURĀRI (8th cent. A.D.)

**ANARGHARĀGHAVA** is a play in seven acts by Murāri who was the son of Bhatta S'rīvardhamāna. Murāri refers to Anaṅgaharśa (c. 700 A.D.), the author of **Tāpasavatsarāja**, and is cited by the Kashmirian poet Ratnākara (c. 850 A.D.), the

author of the *Haravijaya*. Therefore his date may be held to have been the latter half of the 8th cent A.D. In writing his *Anargharāghava* which deals with the story of Rāma, Murāri has closely followed the *Mahāvīracarita* of Bhavabhūti. He even quotes a verse from the *Uttararāmacarita*. It is said that he wrote the *Anargharāghava* to vie with Bhavabhūti. His command over language and particularly the choice of elegant words, as also of Māgha, has been praised by traditional scholars as far superior to Bhavabhūti's.<sup>4</sup> Maṅkha praises him as a master of *Vakrokti*. Some passages in the play of Murāri (cf. IV 25 and 46) indicate that he was influenced by Bhatta Nārāyaṇa also. His skill as a dramatist is far inferior to that of those whom he has imitated.

**SVAPNADASĀNANA**, **MANORAMĀVATSARĀJA** and **PRATIBHĀCĀNAKYA** are among a number of plays by Bhīmata (c. 800 A.D.). They are known only by the citations of Rājas'ekhara, as they are not yet discovered.

### RĀJAS'EKHARA (7th cent. A.D.)

**BĀLARĀMĀYANA**, **BĀLABHARATA** or (PRACANDA-PĀNDAVA as it is also called), **VIDDHASĀLABHANJIKĀ** and **KARPŪRAMĀÑJARĪ** are the four plays available out of the six written by Rājas'ekhara who had won the title of *Kavirāja* and belonged to the Yāyāvariya family of Kṣatriyas. In the *Karpūra-māñjari*, the author refers to himself as the

4. भवभूतिसनादत्य निर्विणमतिना मया । मुरारिपदचिन्तायामिदमाधीयते मनः । मुरारिपदचिन्तायां भवभूतेस्तु का कथा । भवभूतिं परित्यज्य मुरारिमुररीकुरु ॥ मुरारिपदचिन्ता चेत्तदा माधे मतिं कुरु । मुरारिपदचिन्ता चेत्तदा माधे मतिंकुरु ॥

teacher of Nirbhara, a king of Kanoj (about 900 A.D.). In the *Bālabhārata*, he mentions that he composed it at the order of Mahīpāla, the successor of Nirbhara. So, he is to be placed in the early part of the 10th cent. A.D.

THE *BĀLARĀMĀYĀNA*, also called the *Mahā-nātakam* on account of its length, is a long play in ten acts. Its prologue occupies the length of an act while the acts themselves are of the length of a *Nātikā*. The play contains as many as 741 verses. The play dramatises the whole of the *Rāmāyana*, of course with some novel changes, making *Rāvana*'s love the dominating feature of the play. *Rāvana* appears in person in the first act but does not attempt to bend the bow of *Sīva*. He departs 'menacing evil to any husband of *Sitā*'. *Sitā*'s marriage is enacted before him in *Laṅkā*. He imagines a doll of *Sitā* presented to him as the real one and feels disappointed when he discovers that it is only wooden. In his disappointment he runs mad and behaves like *Purūravas* of the *Vikramorvasiyam*.

THE *BĀLABHĀRATA* in two acts is an incomplete play covering the marriage of *Draupadī* and the gambling episode. The plot construction does not reveal any originality but the style is graceful, although some vernacular expressions are used.

THE *VIDDHASĀLABHAÑJIKĀ* is a *nātikā* in four acts depicting the love of *Vidyādharamalla* for *Mrgāṅkāvalī*. The play derives its title from the *Sālabhañjikā* (a model of the heroine in the picture gallery) in whom the hero recognises the form of the maid who 'had cast a collar of pearls round his neck' in his dream. The plot, which is

modelled after the *Mālavikāgnimitram*, is a complex one. The heroine *Mṛgāṅkāvalī*, in the disguise of a boy, is under the care of the queen who arranges for the marriage of this apparent boy with *Kuvalayamālā* of Kuntala. The king in the meantime, aided by the *Vidūṣaka*, is in love with the real heroine. The play however ends with the king's marriage with both *Mṛgāṅkāvalī* and *Kuvalayamālā*.

THE *KARPŪRAMAÑJARĪ* in four acts is a *Prākṛt* play, none of the characters speaking Sanskrit, and hence a *Sattaka*. This play was written by the poet at the request of his wife. The heroine *Karpūramañjari* is a princess and cousin of the senior queen of the hero *Caṇḍapāla*. She is given by a magician to the queen who adds her to the number of her attendants. The king and the maid fall in love. Her friend *Vicakṣanā* and the *Vidūṣaka* help the lovers. Their love is discovered by the queen who imprisons the maid. But the king finds access to her by a subterranean passage and when they both are enjoying a flirtation in a garden, the queen discovers them. The passage at the garden end is blocked; but another passage is available to the sanctuary of *Cāmuṇḍā*, the entrance being concealed behind the statue. Thus the prisoner can play a game of hide-and-seek with the queen, and this enables her to carry out a clever ruse invented by the magician to secure the queen's blessing for the wedding. The queen is induced to demand that the king shall marry a princess of *Lāta* who will secure him imperial rank. She is still at her home, but the magician will fetch her to the place. The

wedding goes on merrily, but the princess is no other than Karpūramāñjari, and the queen has unwittingly accomplished the lovers' desires.'<sup>5</sup>

Rājas'ekhara is a conscious imitator. His style is pedantic and his plays are lengthy. Hence they are not fit for the stage. Rājas'ekhara is considered as marking the decline of the Sanskrit drama.

### KṢEMIŚVARA (10th cent. A.D.)

THE CĀNDAKAUS'IKA and the NAISADHĀNANDA are the two plays written by Kṣemis'vara who was a contemporary of Rājas'ekhara. Mahipāla of Kanyakubja was the patron of both Kṣemis'vara and Rājas'ekhara. Kṣemendra is only a variant of his name and he is not to be identified with the Kashmirian poet of that name. His Cāndakaus'ika in five acts deals with the story of Haris'candra who rebukes Vis'vāmitra, thinking that he was sacrificing a damsel on fire while he was really bringing the Vidyās under his control, and is cursed by him. He would be pardoned only if he surrendered his kingdom and paid a huge sum of money to the sage. To secure the money Haris'candra sells his wife and son to a Brahmin and himself to a Cāndāla undertaking to serve as the keeper of a cemetery. One day his own wife comes bearing the dead body of their son to the cemetery. This is a very severe test to Haris'candra but he stands it and Vis'vāmitra is pleased with his steadfast adherence to truth. His son is brought back to life and the kingdom is restored to him. This play is quite popular. It is written in a

5. Keith, Op. cit. page 234.

simple style and succeeds very well in depicting the Karuṇa-rasa. His *Naiṣadhānanda* is a play in seven acts depicting the story of Nala.

Kṣemendra (c. 1050 A.D.) is known to have written a number of dramas among which *CITRABHĀRATA* and *KANAKA-JĀNAKĪ* seem to be prominent. All of them are lost to us.

### BILHAÑA (11th cent. A.D.)

*KARÑASUNDARĪ* is a nātikā in four acts by Bilhana who is already noticed as the author of the *Vikramāñkadevacarita* and the *Caurapancāsikā*. The play depicts the marriage of the Cālukyan king Kāmadeva with Karnasundari, a Vidyādhara princess who is introduced to the harem by the minister. The king first dreams of her and then sees her in a picture. He falls in love with her which rouses the jealousy of the queen who thereupon tries to play a trick on the king by arranging his marriage with a boy dressed as Karnasundari. The clever minister scents this and substitutes the real Karnasundari for the disguised boy at the right time and their marriage takes place amidst rejoicings consequent upon the tidings of the king's triumph abroad. Bilhana has constructed his play after the model of the *Mālavikāgnimitra*, the *Ratnāvalī* and the *Viddha-sālabhañjikā*.

### THE MAHĀNĀTAKA

THE *HANUMANNĀTAKA*, also known as the *MAHĀNĀTAKA* on account of its length, is a dramatised version of the story of Rāma, interspersed with purely descriptive passages and consisting of fourteen acts. According to tradition,

the play was written by Hanūmān on the hard rocks of the Western ghats. Vālmīki feared that it might reduce his own poem into a tale and cast all those rocks to the sea. Thence fragments were picked up by a merchant and brought to king Bhoja who directed one Dāmodaramis'ra to put them together. The truth that underlies the story is that the drama is the production of different times. Though an abridgement, it lacks brevity. Its value is more antiquarian than literary. Perhaps as a work of mixed dramatic and declamatory passages, it has some interest and works of this kind may once have been current in the early stages. The date of the play is not definitely known. The connection of the poet with Bhoja would bring its final didaction to the 11th century A.D. We have only ten acts in the version of Madhusūdana. The work is a nātaka only in name. Some scholars feel that it was meant to be a Chāyānātaka.

### PREDECESSORS OF JAYADEVA (11th & 12th cent.)

About a hundred works were written, it is said, by the one-eyed Rāmacandra (sūri) who was the pupil of the Jain writer Hemacandra (1088--1172 A.D.). Most of his works are not available. His KAUMUDĪMITRĀNANDA, a prakarana in ten acts dealing with the love of a merchant's son named Mitīānanda for Kaumudi, abounds in miracles and magic episodes. His NALAVILĀSA is a nātaka in seven acts dealing with the story of Nala and Damayanti. According to this play Nala and Damayanti wed in the gāndharva manner even before the Svayamvara which takes place later on.

The SATYAHARIS'CANDRA, a nātaka in six acts, and the NIRBHAYABHĪMA, a vyāyoga, are two other nice plays of the author.

A king of Kerala named Kulasēkharavarman (11th cent. A.D.) was the author of two plays the SUBHADRĀDHANAÑJAYA and TAPATĪSVAYAMVARA.

THE LATAKAMELAKAPRAHASANA which is an amusing farce was written by Sāṅkhadharakavirāja of the 12th cent. A.D.

THE DHANAÑJAYAVIJAYA is a vyāyoga written by Kāñcanapāṇḍita who was patronised by Jayadeva a ruler of Kanyākubja (12th cent. A.D.). It deals with Arjuna's victory at the cattle-raid of the Kauravas.

Two plays belonging to this period are preserved on stone in Ajmere. The first of them, the HARAKELĪNĀTAKA dealing with the fight between Arjuna and Siva, was written by Vigraharājadeva Visāladeva of the Cahamāna family. The other LALITAVIGRAHĀNĀTAKA is by Somadeva who has depicted in the play the love of his patron Vigraharājadeva and Des'alādevi.

Six plays, representing the different types of the drama were written by one Vatsarāja who was the minister of Paramardideva of Kālañjara (1168-1203 A.D.). They are the—1). KIRĀTĀRJUNĪYA (a Vyāyoga), 2) HĀSYACŪDĀMANI (a Prahasana), 3) TRIPURADĀHA (a Dima), 4) SAMUDRAMATHANA (a Samavakāra), 5) KARPŪRACARITA (a Bhāna), and 6) RUKMINĪHARĀNA (an īhāmṛga).

### JAYADEVA (13th cent. A.D.)

THE PRASANNARĀGHAVA written by Jayadeva, who had the title Piyūṣavarsa in view of the poetic

excellences of his works, deals in seven acts with the story of Rāma, introducing several changes on the model of the *Mahāvīracarita* of Bhavabhūti. Bānāsura and Rāvana are rival suitors for the hand of Sitā. The play introduces a spectacular scene where the river deities of Gaṅgā, Yamunā, Sarayū, and Godāvari are engaged in conversation. It abounds in long descriptions and too many, but elegant, lyrical passages.

The author belongs to the early part of the 13th century. In addition to his being a dramatist, he was a logician and a rhetorician also. His *Candrāloka* is a popular work on *Alaṅkāra*.

### MINOR DRAMATISTS OF LATER CENTURIES

PRAHLĀDANA, praised in the *Kirtikaumudi* and quoted in the *Saduktikarnāmṛtam* wrote a *vyāyoga* called *PĀRTHAPARĀKRAMĀ* (in one act) dealing with the victory of Arjuna in the gograhana fight. Madana, who held the title Bālasarasvatī and was the preceptor of the Paramāra king Arjunavarman, wrote *PĀRIJĀTAMAÑJARĪ*, or Vijayasrī as it is also called, a pretty nātikā depicting the love of Arjunavarman and a damsel Pārijātamañjari. This play is available as a fragment in two acts inscribed on stone at Dhārā in 1218 A.D. Jayasimhasūri, a S'vetāmbara Jain priest, wrote the *HAMMIRAMADAMARDANA* in five acts depicting how Hammira, a mahomedan king who invaded Gugera, was defeated by Viradhavala. The play is dated 1230 A.D. Moksāditya's *BHĪMAPARĀKRAMĀ*, a *vyāyoga* belonging to this period, is on the model of Pārthaparākrama. Subhāta's *DŪTĀNGADA*

in one act deals with the mission of Āṅgada as an envoy of Rāma to Rāvaṇa. This is considered a shadow-play. Prince Ravivarma of Kerala wrote the PRADYUMNĀBHΥUDAYA in five acts dealing with the marriage of Prince Pradyumna with Prabhāvati.

Vidyānātha, also called Agastya, the court poet of king Pratāparudradeva of Warrangal (1249–1395 A.D.), wrote the PRATĀPARUDRA-KALYĀNA in five acts as a model drama and incorporated it in his Alāṅkāra work Pratāparudra-yas'obhūṣana. The play deals with the accession of king Pratāparudra to the throne. Narasimha, the nephew of Vidyānātha, dramatised the Kādambarī in the KĀDAMBARĪKALYĀNA in eight acts. His brother Viśvanātha, who was the teacher of the authoress Gaṅgādevī, wrote the SAUGANDHIKĀHARANA which is a vyāyoga dealing with Bhīma's going to secure the divine Saugandhikā flower from Kubera's garden. The play KANDARPA-SAMBHAVA and the dima VĪRABHADRA VIJRMBHANA are by Jyotiśvara who was better known by his title Kavis'ekhara. The UNMATTARĀGHAVA, an one act play of the Āṅka type, was written by Bhāskara, while a Prekṣaṇaka of the same name was written by Virūpākṣa, son of Harihara II of the Vijayanagar dynasty.

Early in the 15th cent. A.D., Vāmanabhatta Bāṇa wrote the PĀRVATĪPARINAYA which was till recently believed to have been the work of Bāṇa of Kādambarī fame. The play deals with the marriage of Siva and Pārvati. The influence of Kālidāsa's Kumārasambhava on the poet is clearly visible in the play. The nātikā called Kanaka-

lekhā-kalyāna and the Śringārabhūṣanabhāṇa are by the same poet. The Mukundānanda, a bhāṇa by Kāśīpatikavirāja is of the same period. The Bhartr̥harinirveda, a play in five acts by Harihara, depicts how Bhartr̥hari renounced all worldly ties being filled with great sorrow when his wife gave up her life as a result of his own spreading a false rumour that he was dead just to test her fidelity. Rūpagosvāmin, the pupil of Śrī Kṛṣṇacaitanya, wrote two nāṭakas, namely, the Vidagdhamādhava and the Lalitamādhava, each in ten acts, and one bhāṇa called Dānakelikāumudi, — all in praise of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

About the beginning of the 16th cent. A.D., the 7th Jeer of the Ahobilamutt, Sāthakopa III, wrote the drama Vāsantikāparinaya in five acts describing the marriage of the deity Ahobilanarasimha with the wood-nymph Vāsantikā. The play has many poetic excellences.

The Kamsavadha, a play in six acts, was written by Sēsakṛṣṇa, a contemporary of Akbar. The Bhaimīparinaya, a play dealing with the wedding of Damayanti with Nala, is one among the several dramas and poems of Śrīnivāsa-diksitaratnakhetā, a contemporary of Appayyadiksita. Rājacūḍāmaṇidiksita, son of Ratnakhetā, wrote a nāṭaka Ānandarāghava, a nāṭikā Kamalinikalahamsa and a bhāṇa Śringārasarvasva. The Hargaurī-vivāha by Jagajjyotirmalla of Nepal, the Bhojarāja-saccarita in two acts by Vedānta Vāgīśa Bhattācārya, the Madanagopālavilāsabhāṇa, the Subhadrādhanañjaya ( in five acts ) and Ratnesvara-prasādana, also in five acts, by Gururāma belong to this period.

The *Mallikāmāruta* of *Uddāndi*, or *Uddandānātha*, was written in the middle of the 17th cent. A.D. under the patronage of a Zamorin of Calicut. The similarity of the names of *Uddāndi* and *Dāndi* had led, till recently, to the wrong ascription of the work to the authorship of *Dāndin*. This play is a close imitation of the *Mālatimādhava* in almost every respect. The *Nalacaritanātaka* of *Nilakanthadiksita* who is the reputed author of several long and short *kāvyas*, and the *Pradyumnābhodaya* of *Veṅkatādhvarin* of *Visvaguṇādarsa* fame, *Rāmabhadrādiksita*'s *Jānakīparinaya* which has introduced several original changes into the epic version of the story of *Rāma* and his *Sṛṅgāratilaka*, the two *Bhāṇas*, viz., *Sṛṅgārasarvasva* and *Subhadrāparinaya* of *Nallakavi*, the *Kanakaratnākara-prahasana* of *Kavītārkika*, *Sāmarājādiksita*'s *Sridāmacarita* in five acts and the *Dhūrtanartakaprahasana* and *Mahādeva*'s *Adbhuta darpana* in ten acts are some of the noteworthy plays of this period.

In the 18th and 19th centuries, many distinguished poets of South India wrote several plays both in Sanskrit and *Prākṛt*. Most of them have not yet been printed. A noteworthy feature of the plays of this period is that they are very much influenced by English writers and modern Indian literature. Many social plays, such as the *Snusāvijaya* by *Sundararājākavi* of Travancore, also sprang up during this period.

## CHAPTER XIII

### ALLEGORICAL PLAYS

The controversies between Vāk, Manas, Prāṇa, and the Indriyas found in the Kṛṣṇayajurveda and the Upanisads go to show that allegory, i.e., personification of abstract ideas, is as old as the Vedic literature. Indian poets have all along shown a tendency to personify inanimate objects and even personal qualities. Vernal beauty and Royal glory, for instance, are to them real persons with flesh and blood, as it were. In fables like the Pañca-tantra, animals are not only humanised but are made to preach ethical precepts. The allegorical play is the result of an extension of this into the field of drama.<sup>1</sup> But it is really noteworthy that this allegory has been employed mostly to teach the philosophical doctrines of particular systems.

#### ASVAGHOṢA'S PLAY (A Fragment)

The earliest available play of an allegorical character is the one which bears no title as it was discovered only as a fragment in the same Manuscript as the one containing the SĀRIPUTRA-PRAKARĀṄA of Asvaghosa. Buddhi, Kirti and Dhṛti appear as characters in this play. Towards the end Buddha himself makes his appearance. The real trend of the play is not clear as the fragment is too short. It is however significant that all the characters speak Sanskrit in this play wherein real figures mix with allegorical ones.

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1. न तच्छास्त्रं न सा विद्या न तच्छुद्धं न ताः कलाः ।  
नासौ योगो न तदूक्षानं नादके यज्ञ हृथ्यते ॥

## KRŚNAMIS'RA'S PRABODHACANDRODAYA (12th cent.)

There is a long gap of more than 10 centuries between the above allegorical play of As'vaghosa and Krśnamis'ra's Prabodhacandrodaya where all the characters are allegorical. No play of this type belonging to the intervening period has come down to us. In Prof. Keith's words 'it must remain uncertain whether there was a train of tradition leading from As'vaghosa to Krśnamis'ra or whether the latter created the type of drama afresh; the former theory is more likely.' (Op.cit.p.84)

Krśnamis'ra was an ascetic and a missionary of the 12th cent A.D. for the propagation of Advaita. It is said that he wrote the Prabodhacandrodaya in order to bring round one of his disciples who was averse to the study of philosophy. The play defends and presents the Advaita form of the Viśnu doctrine in its six acts. It stresses on devotion to Viśnu as the means for salvation. The characters are all abstract ideas such as MANAS, AHAṄKĀRA etc. divided into two conflicting casts. There is a war between VIVEKA and MAHĀMOHA, which ends by the rise of the moon in the form of knowledge, *Prabodha*.

This play is unique; for, contrary to accepted principles, it has Sānta as its principal Rasa. According to writers on dramaturgy, the Sānta-rasa cannot be made prominent in a drama. There seems to be some ground to this rule, for, Sānta being peace is essentially negative and passive and cannot therefore be enacted. But Krśnamis'ra has attempted the impossible and has succeeded to a considerable extent. In its conception it is

not probably what may be described as an acting play. Yet it can be acted. It is a play which was intended, as Hardy would say, "for mental performance", but it is not without dramatic potentialities of its own. It is evident that the work was the result of the widely spread philosophic study and thought in India at the time it was written. It must have been regarded then also as a great success, for, it has served as the model for imitation to several writers. While the Prabodhacandrodaya differs from the classical dramas in having Sānta for its chief Rasa, it resembles ancient Indian plays in having more or less the didactic and religious purpose.

### YAS'AHPĀLA's MOHARĀJAPARĀJAYA (13th cent. A.D.)

THE MOHARĀJAPARĀJAYA or '*The defeat of the king confusion*' by Yas'ahpāla (13th cent. A.D.) is a fine example of Jain allegory. This play in five acts deals with the conversion of the Cālukya king of Gujarat, Kumārapāla, to Jainism. All its characters except the king, the sage Hemacandra and the Vidūṣaka, are personifications of qualities. The play was first enacted at Thārāpadra, probably the capital of Marwar, on the occasion of the Mahāvīra festival.

### VEDĀNTADES'IKA's SANKALPASŪRYODAYA (14th cent.)

THE SĀNKALPASŪRYODAYA of Venkatanātha (1268-1369), popularly known as Vedānta Des'ika, is very much like the Prabodhacandrodaya in its plan. Being the most distinguished teacher of Viśiṣṭādvaita after Rāmānuja, the poet has designed the play so as to uphold the Viśiṣṭādvaita

doctrines. The play, which is in 10 acts, depicts how 'the rise of the Sun in the form of God's will (Sāṅkalpa), dispels the darkness of birth and death and liberates the soul, and, on that account, derives its title. Sānta is the main sentiment of this play also. The prologue is too long. The play is all right for reading, but not for the stage. Poetic excellence of a very high order is revealed in the play.

### OTHER ALLEGORICAL PLAYS<sup>2</sup>

The AMRTODAYA by Gokulanātha (16th cent. A.D.) is in five acts and treats the story of the Jivātman from creation to annihilation. The CAITANYACANDRODAYA by Kavi Karnapūra, also called Paramānandadāsa (16th cent, A.D.), gives an account of the success of Śrī Kṛṣṇacaitanya of Bengal in the propagation of the doctrine of Bhakti, although it fails to impress the saint's spiritual power. The VIDYĀPARINAYA and JĪVANANDANA are two Saiva plays of Ānandarāyamakhi (18th cent. A.D.). The former play deals with the marriage of the Jivātman with Vidyā (spiritual knowledge), while the latter represents the attainment of Mokṣa by the individual soul and cleverly combines with it the fundamentals of Ayurvedic medicine in the course of its seven acts. There is a view that they were written by one Vedakavi and attributed to the authorship of Ānandarāyamakhi who was the minister of Shahaji, king of Tanjore.

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2. For a fuller list of allegorical plays, see Journal of Oriental Research, Madras, Vol. X part II.

## CHĀYĀNĀTAKA

The Chāyānātaka or shadow-play is not mentioned in early treatises of dramaturgy. Card-board figures are placed on the screen and made to move by means of threads. The dialogues are held behind the curtain. The *Abhinavabhārati* of Abhinavagupta (c. 1000 AD.) is the earliest work referring to this type of plays.

THE DHARMĀBHYUDAYA of Meghaprabhācārya of uncertain date, is a Chāyānātyaprabandha as mentioned in its prologue. The Dūtāngada of Subhata, noticed earlier, was represented as a chāyā play in 1243 A.D. in honour of the dead king Kumārapāla at the court of Tribhuvanapāla. The Subhadrāparinaya, Rāmābhyudaya and Pāñdavābhyudaya are three plays of this kind by Vyāsa S'rīrāmamis'ra of the 15th century.

## DECLINE OF THE SANSKRIT DRAMA

Three main periods are generally marked in the history of the Sanskrit drama, the first from Bhāsa to Harṣa, the second from Bhavabhūti to Bhattanārāyaṇa and the next from Rājasekhara onwards. In fact, Rājasekhara marks the decline of the Sanskrit drama. As already mentioned, this is due partly to the unsettled political condition in the country then and partly to the growth of literature in other Indian languages, which drew away towards it some of the best readers and writers alike.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THEORIES OF POETRY<sup>1</sup>

What factors go to make a good Kāvya?—This question was inquired into by the ancient Hindus who had a double qualification, viz., 1) aptitude for abstract investigation and 2) an artistic bent of mind; and important results were arrived at regarding the nature of poetry. In fact, extant works on poetics contain not so much of criticism, as this enquiry. The subject was viewed from different angles by different Ālāṅkārikas and, as a result, there arose eight schools under the names, Rīti, Guṇa, Alāṅkāra, Vakrokti, Rasa, Dhvani, Anumāna, and Aucitya.

Rīti is the way of writing. Although only two or three 'ways of writing,' viz., the Vaidarbhi, Gaudi and Pāñcāli were originally recognised, later rhetoricians have taken into account three more, the Lāti, Āvanti and Māgadhi. The names themselves suggest that all the six Rītis were prevalent in particular provinces. Daṇdin was the

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1. This branch of literature is called Alāṅkāra-sāstra in Sanskrit. Alāṅkāra is used here in a double sense, viz., 1. a thing of beauty and 2. (literary) embellishments. It is also called Sāhitya-sāstra as it has mainly for its basis the inseparable relation between word and its sense. Thus the scope of this Sāstra is wide and covers the following topics — Theory and definition of poetry (i.e., Kāvya-lakṣaṇa), literary merits and defects (Guṇa and Doṣa), different connotations of words (Sabda-vṛtti), classification of Kāvyas, Rīti or style, Rasas, dramaturgy and figures of speech.

fore-runner of this school. According to him 'KĀVYĀ' was that writing of a poet which was characterised by certain literary excellences like *lucidity*(prasāda), *sweetness*(mādhurya), etc. Vāmana followed him and spoke of Rīti as the soul of poetry. He was the very first writer to conceive the idea of a *soul* or Ātmā of Kāvya.

The GUNA school runs along the same lines as of the Rīti school. Gunas are of SĀBDA and ARTHA. The former is concerned with the form of the composition while the latter is with the Rīti. Only three Gunas, viz., Prasāda, Mādhurya and Ojas (*floridity*) were originally recognised. Vāmana enumerated ten. But, after him, the Sābdagunas and Arthagunas were merged in Alāṅkāra and Rasa respectively.

The ALĀṄKĀRA school upholds literary embellishments of sound and sense, i.e., the Sābdālāṅkāras and Arthālāṅkāras. Although Bhārata deals with the Alāṅkāras, Daṇdin and Bhāmaha are held to be authoritative exponents of this school. As recognised by them, there were only thirty-eight alāṅkāras; but this number slowly increased to two hundred in later days.

VAKROKTI is a peculiar mode of speech which is supposed to lend perfection to Alāṅkāras. Hence, the Vakrokti school is no more than an off-spring of the Alāṅkāra school. The exponents of this school are Bhāmaha and Kuntaka. Vakrokti is the soul of poetry according to them. It is treated as a distinct Alāṅkāra by later writers.

RASA, as pointed out earlier by us (p. 167 f.) means an inner attitude of detached joy. It is an

experience as against **BHĀVA** which is an object of our contemplation. This **Rasa** is invariably of the nature of joy, no matter whether the emotion or **Bhāva** treats of something happy or tragic. Evoking of such a joyful experience was considered to be the main task of the poet by Bharata, the first exponent of the **Rasa** theory. Bharata recognised only eight<sup>2</sup> **Rasas** or sentiments. They are **Sringāra**, **Hāsya**, **Karuna**, **Raudra**, **Vira**, **Bhayānaka**, **Bibhatsa** and **Ādbhuta**. The ninth sentiment **SĀNTA** is an addition by later writers. Each one of these sentiments has a dominant emotion (**Sthāyi-bhāva**) which itself, in its final stage of growth, acquires the name of sentiment. The **sthāyibhāva** corresponding to the above nine sentiments are **Rati**, **Hāsa**, **S'oka**, **Krodha**, **Utsāha**, **Bhaya**, **Jugupsā**, **Vismaya** and **Sāma**. These are produced by **Vyabhicāribhāvas** (accessory feelings), **Ālambana** and **Uddīpana Vibhāvas** (exciting factors), and **Anubhāva** and **Sāttvikabhāvas** (physical manifestations of emotions).

Bharata's **Rasa** theory was followed and further expounded by Bhoja, Dhanāñjaya, Udbhata and many others.

The **Dhvani** theory is based on the analysis of the meanings of words. **Abhidhā**, **Lakṣaṇā**, and **Vyañjanā**, i.e., primary sense, secondary sense and suggestion are the three kinds of denotation of words. Of these, the **Vyañjanā** or suggestion brings to the mind something which is not expressed in addition to the primary sense of what is actually expressed. This suggestion (**Dhvani**) is the soul

2. See **Nātyas'āstra** VI 15.

of poetry according to this school. It is of three kinds,—Vastudhvani, Alāṅkāradhvani and Rasadhvani in accordance with the import of the 'suggestion' of the particular expression.

Ānandavardhana is the chief exponent of this Dhvani theory. Abhinavagupta restricted its scope to sentiment. The Gunas and Alāṅkāras are to be considered only in relation to sentiment. Thus Kāvyas are of three kinds — (1) those that are dominated by suggestion (Dhvani-kāvyas), (2) those which accord a secondary importance to suggestion (Gūṇībhūtavyāṅgyakāvyas) and (3) those which contain no suggestion (Citrakāvyas).

The ANUMĀNA school founded by Śāṅkuka views that it is through inference (Anumāna) that the sentiment is experienced. An actor's gesticulation causes such an inference. This view is against that of Bhattanāyaka that sentiment is only to be experienced and not perceived.

The AUCITYA school holds that propriety is the very life of poetry. This theory is expounded by Kṣemendra,

## EARLIEST AUTHORITIES ON POETICS

Nandikesvara, Nārada and others are known to have been the earliest authorities on poetics; but none of their works has come down to us. The Agnipurāṇa (see page 45) which is of a miscellaneous character and of uncertain date contains an account of poetics and dramaturgy. Medhāvirudra, whose work is lost, is cited by Bhāmaha and later writers.

## BHĀRATA (c. 400 B.C.)

The earliest extant work is the *Nātyasāstra* of Bharata whom Kālidāsa mentions in his *Vikramorvasiyam* II<sup>18</sup> as having taught dramatic representation to the heavenly nymphs. The *Nātyasāstra* consists of 37 chapters dealing with dramaturgy, dance and music. Only four *Alaṅkāras*, viz., *Rūpaka*, *Upamā*, *Dipaka*, and *Yamaka* are spoken of. These *alaṅkāras* and the ten *gunas* are treated as aids for perfecting sentiment. Literary defects are also enumerated. As noted earlier, it gives an elaborate account of the eight sentiments and their corresponding dominant emotions. The work is known to have been commented upon by Māṭrgupta, Harṣavardhana, Sāṅkuka, Lollata, Udbhata, Bhattanāyaka, Abhinavagupta and some others. The 'Bhārata-tilaka' of unknown authorship is said to be the earliest commentary on the *Nātyasāstra*. Abhinavagupta's *Abhinavabhāratī* is the only commentary now available.

Bharata is generally mentioned as a sage, a *muni*. He was a hoary predecessor of Kālidāsa. He is to be placed about 400 B.C. or earlier, although the present form of his *Nātyasāstra* which contains numerous interpolations is to be assigned to a late date.

## DANDIN (6th cent. A.D.)

THE KĀVYĀDARŚA of Dandin is an excellent manual of poetics representing a phase of the earlier theory. It is divided into three chapters, the first dealing with the definition of Kāvyas, the distinctive qualities of style, the difference between the Vaidarbhi and Gaudi rītis, the second

with definitions of Alāṅkāras with illustrations and the third with an enumeration of Yamakas and literary defects. The s'lokas are in Dandin's best style. The examples are all his own and his definitions are so apt that it is difficult to forget them after they are read.

Dandin's relation to Bhāmaha or his priority over the latter cannot be proved. Both authors seem to be attacking each other's views. It may even be that they are only referring to the views of rival schools of which they were followers.

Dandin was undoubtedly the author of the Das'akumāracarita. We have shown earlier (p. 111) that his date must be the 6th cent. AD.

### BHĀMAHA (6th cent. A.D.)

Bhāmaha wrote the KĀVYĀLAṄKĀRA which is familiarly known as Bhāmahālāṅkāra. It is in six chapters called paricchedas. The first chapter deals with KĀVYAS'ARĪRA, the second and third with ALAṄKĀRAS, the fourth with DōSAS, the fifth with NYĀYAS and the sixth with S'ABDAS'UDDHI. Bhāmaha seeks to maintain the division of Kathā and Ākhyāyikā in prose which Dandin rejects. Mādhurya, Prasāda and Ojas are the three literary guṇas according to Bhāmaha, while Dandin enumerates ten. Bhāmaha is against the division of style into Vaidarbhi and Gaudi. Vakrokti is not a distinct Alāṅkāra according to him. On the other hand he maintains that it is only Atis'ayokti in an extended sense and that it is an essential factor for the excellence of poetic expression.

### VĀMANA (8th cent A.D.)

Vāmana, who was in the court of king Jayāpida of Kashmir (8th cent. A.D.), wrote the KĀVYĀLAṄKĀRASŪTRA. The work, which is in five chapters called Adhikaranas, contains 319 sūtras and has a Vṛtti or gloss by the author himself. Like Dāṇdin's work it belongs to the Prācīna school of Ālāṅkārikas. It emphasises Rīti, which is nothing but excellence of the gunas of SĀBDA and ARTHA and describes it as the soul of Kāvya. It was Vāmana who first used the word Ātmā with reference to Kāvya; but even he does not go beyond Sābda and Artha. There is nothing deeper than they for him. He added the Pāñcālī style to the already existing Vaidarbhi and Gaudi. While Dāṇdin frames his own examples except in one or two places, Vāmana quotes profusely from classical writers to illustrate his rules. It is noteworthy that he includes a chapter on prayogas wherein several matters of grammatical importance are discussed. In that section Vāmana explains expressions such as अग्रहस्त, विचार, which are somewhat anomalous in their character. The work does not deal with dramaturgy.

### UDBHATA (8th cent. A.D.)

Udbhatā, a Kashmirian contemporary of Vāmana, wrote the KĀVYĀLAṄKĀRA-SĀṄGRAHA in six chapters. The work is familiarly called Udbhatālāṅkāra. His Bhāmahavivarana, a commentary on Bhāmaha's work and his Kumārasambhava, a Mahākāvya on the model of Kālidāsa's work of the same name, are lost to us. His definitions of

Alaṅkāras agree with and are sometimes even identical with Bhāmaha's. Styles are classified by him as UPANĀGARIKĀ (elegant), GRĀMYĀ (ordinary) and PARUSĀ (harsh). He is the first writer to mention Sānta as a sentiment. Rasa is emphasised by him as the main aspect of good poetry. The number of Alaṅkāras are forty-one according to him. Pratīhārendurāja (10th cent. A.D.) of Konkan has commented on Udbhata's work.

### RUDRATA (9th cent. A.D.)

Rudrata, another Kashmirian writer, wrote the KĀVYĀLAṄKĀRA in sixteen chapters. He mentions the SĀNTA as the ninth sentiment and adds PREYAS as the tenth. He recognises the LĀTī as the fourth style. He deals with six languages, viz., Samskr̥ta, Prākṛta, Māgadhi, Paisācī, Saurasenī, and Apabhramṣa. Rājas'ekhara, Dhanika, Abhinavagupta and others quote him, but the DHVANI theory was not known to him. He revives the practice of framing his own examples to illustrate his rules.

### ĀNANDAVARDHANA (9th cent. A.D.)

About the beginning of the 9th cent. A.D., a writer known by his title 'Sahṛdaya' expounded the DHVANI theory in 120 kārikas. Ānandavardhana has commented on these kārikas in his DHVANYĀLOKA which is divided into four UDYOTAS or sections, and has added a Vṛtti or gloss to his work. There is a view that the original kārikas also are by Ānandavardhana himself. We have already given an account of the Dhvani theory expounded by Ānandavardhana (see pp. 226 f.).

Ānandavardhāna lived in the court of Avantivarman (854-884 A.D.) of Kashmir. It is held generally that the Dhvanyāloka must have been composed in about 850 A.D. The work contains citations from the author's other works DEVĪSĀTAKA, ARJUNACARITA, VIṢAMABĀNALĪLĀ, and HARIVIJAVA, the last three of which are not extant. The Dhvanyāloka has been commented by many writers. The LOCANA of Abhinavagupta is the most important of them.

### RĀJASEKHARA (10th cent. A.D.)

The dramatist Rājasekhara (10th century) wrote the KĀVYAMĀMSA in 18 chapters. The work records many traditional accounts of poets and poetesses. Mention is also made of the views of others on subjects pertaining to literature. The Alāṅkāra system is spoken of as the seventh Vedāṅga and the fifteenth Vidyāsthāna. The work contains plenty of quotations from various authors. (See pp. 208 ff.)

### DHANĀÑJAYA AND DHANIKA (10th-11th cent. A.D.)

Dhanāñjaya, who was in the court of Muñja (10th cent. A.D.), wrote the DASARŪPA which is a compendium of dramaturgy. The work has 300 kārikas divided into 4 prakaranas. It was commented after the death of Muñja, by the author's own brother named Dhanika in the DASARŪPĀVALOKA as it is usually called. The excellence of this classical work on the subject caused in a large measure the neglect of Bharata's Nātyasāstra in later centuries. This work takes for illustration well known dramas and does not invent fictitious illustrations. The Venisamhāra and the Ratnāvali

are prominent so far as quotations are concerned. It concerns mainly with dramas and refers to the general nature of poetry only in a passing manner. Naturally this work pays particular attention to Rasa. A point to be noted in this connection is that the author vehemently opposes the status accorded to Sānta as a sentiment. KĀVYANIRNAYA, a work on poetics by Dhanika and quoted in the *Avaloka*, is now lost.

### BHATTĀYAKA (10th cent. A.D.)

Bhattachāyaka is the author of *Hṛdaya-darpana*, a commentary on Bharata's *Nātyasāstra*. The work is not available. Bhattachāyaka rejects the dhvani theory of Ānandavardhana and upholds the Rasa theory. This stand is repudiated by Abhinavagupta. Hence Bhattachāyaka must be later than Ānandavardhana and prior to Abhinavagupta. According to this author the factors that contribute to the beauty of Kāvya are three, viz., *Abhidhā*, *Bhāvākatva* and *Bhojakatva*. Sentiment is only to be experienced and not perceived.

RUDRABHATTA of about the same period wrote the *Rasakalikā* and the *Sringāratilaka*, the earliest reference to the latter of which is traced in the *Kavyānusāsana* of Hemacandra (1088-1172 A.D.). He is not identical with Rudrata. He deals with all the nine sentiments as they are developed in poems. *Tripuravadha* is mentioned as another work of the author.

### ABHINAVAGUPTA (11th cent. A.D.)

Abhinavagupta is the author of the *Dhvanyā-locana*, a commentary on the *Dhvanyāloka* of Ānandavardhana. He is held to have studied

under 19 teachers such as Bhattendurāja and Bhattatauta and written 41 works on poetics and S'aivism. He was a Saivite of the Pratyabhijñā school. His *ABHINAVABHĀRATI* is a valuable commentary on Bharata's *Nātyasāstra*. The *KĀVYAKAUTUKA-VIVARĀNA* is his commentary on Bhattatauta's *Kāvyakautuka*, a work on poetics. This work is not extant. In the *Dhvanyāloka-locana*, which is also known by the name *Sahṛdayāloka-locana*, Abhinavagupta re-established the dhvani theory by refuting all the opponents of his school. The result was that the *Guṇa*, *Rīti*, *Anumāna* and *Vakrokti* schools ceased to flourish after him.

### KUNTAKA (11th cent. A.D.)

Kūntaka, or Kuntala as he is also called, was a younger contemporary of Abhinavagupta. He was a great exponent of the *Vakrokti* theory. His work, the *VAKROKTIJIVITA*, has three chapters and is incomplete. He evolves three styles, viz., the *Sukumāra*, *Vicitra* and *Madhyama* in place of older ones named after some provinces. According to him, each writer has his own literary manner. The three styles named are only broad classifications. *Kālidāsa* represents the *SUKUMĀRAMĀRGA*; *Bāna* and *Bhavabhūti* represent the *VICITRAMĀRGA*; *Māṭrgupta* and *Māyurāja* are representatives of the *MADHYAMAMĀRGA*. Literature requires the *BHAṄGI-BHĀNITI* or an imaginative and figurative speech. Such a figurative expression or *VAKROKTI* is the most essential thing to make good poetry. *Svabhāvokti* is not counted as an *alānkāra* by this school.

## MAHIMABHATTA (11th cent. A.D.)

Mahimabhatta ably expounds the *Anumāna* theory of Sāṅkuka in his *VYAKTIVIVEKA* which contains three sections. The theories of *Vakrokti* and *Dhvani* are rejected by this author according to whom it is only *Anumāna* or inference which causes poetic experience. Mahimabhatta, being himself a great logician, introduced intellectual gymnastics of logic even into the æsthetic field. He is considered the most destructive critic of the *dhvani* school. The *TATTVOVTIKOS'A*, another work of the author on poetics, is not extant.

## BHOJA (11th cent. A.D.)

King Bhoja of Dhārā (1018-1054 A.D.) has to his credit two works on *Alaṅkāra*, viz., the *SARASVATIKĀNTHĀBHARĀNA* and the *Sṛṅgāra-PRAKĀS'a*. The former is a voluminous work and has five chapters dealing with the merits and defects of poetry, *alaṅkāras* and *rasas*. He recognises the *Avanti* and *Māgadhi* styles in addition to the four admitted by Rudrata. His definitions are illustrated with citations from the works of many famous writers, which help in a way to determine the chronology of those writers. The *Sṛṅgāraprakās'a* is in 36 chapters and deals with *kāvyas*, the *gunas* and *dosas* and sentiments. The *Sṛṅgārarasa* is considered to be the most prominent.

## KSEMENDRA (11th cent. A.D.)

Kṣemendra sponsors the *AUCITYA* theory in his *AUCITYAVICĀRACARĀ*. Propriety is an essential factor of good poetry. The excellence of a poem

depends upon the appropriateness of words, their meaning, qualities, alaṅkāras, rasas and all other things constituting the poem. He points out the faults in the usages of even eminent writers. He cites from many works of different writers and of his own as illustrations. In his another work, *KAVIKANTHĀBHARĀNA* in five chapters, he discusses how one can become a poet. His *SUVRTTATILAKA* is a treatise on prosody.

### MAMMATA (c. 1100 A.D.)

Mammata of Kashmir is the author of the *KĀVYAPRAKĀṢA* which is a highly esteemed work on Alāṅkāra. The *Kāvyaaprakāṣa* adopts the dhvani canon completely and is admittedly based on the *Dhvanyāloka* of Ānandavardhana. It consists of ten chapters called *ULLĀSAS*. It is in the form of *KĀRIKĀS* with the author's own gloss on them. It is said that Mammata wrote only up to the *PARIKARA* in the 9th chapter and that the rest of the work was written by Allata or Alaka as he was sometimes called. In the *Kāvyaaprakāṣa* Mammata has criticised all older views of poetry and silenced the opponents of the dhvani theory. The commentaries on Mammata's work seem to be numberless, for, every young man aspiring for a scholar's fame seems to have commented upon this work. Mammata adopts the healthy way of quoting from classical works instead of composing them for the occasion. He is believed to have been the brother of Kaiyatā, the illustrious commentator on the *Mahābhāṣya* of Patañjali. His another work *SĀBDĀVYĀPĀRAVICĀRA* deals with the denotation of words.

HEMACANDRA (1088-1172 A.D.) wrote the KĀVYĀNUSĀSANA with his own commentary Alāṅkāracūḍāmani on it.

SĀRADĀTANAYA (12th cent. A.D.) expounded the view of Bharata in his BHĀVAPRAKĀṢĀ which has 10 Adhikaranas. He refuted the dhvani theory and upheld the rasa school.

### RUYYAKA (12th cent. A.D.)

Ruyyaka, also known as RUCIKA, wrote the ALĀṄKĀRASARVASVA in the form of Sūtras with a commentary on them. He was the teacher of Maṅkha, the author of S'rīkanthacarita. His date is about 1150 A.D. According to some scholars Ruyyaka wrote only the sūtras; the commentary was by Maṅkha. The work upholds the dhvani theory after summarising all the other rival schools. Ruyyaka wrote commentaries on Mammata's Kāvyaprakāṣā and Mahimabhatta's Vyaktiviveka. His HARSACARITAVĀRTIKA is a commentary on Bāṇa's Harṣacarita. The ALĀṄKĀRĀNUSĀRINĪ and SAHĀDAYALILĀ are his two other works on poetics and the ideals of a man of taste respectively.

There are two Jain writers by the same name VĀGBHATA, one of the 12th cent. and the other of the 13th cent. A.D. The first wrote the VĀGBHATĀLĀṄKĀRA in five chapters. The second wrote the KĀVYĀNUSĀSANA wherein he refers to the earlier Vāgbhata.

JAYADEVA, the dramatist whom we have noticed earlier, wrote the CANDRĀLOKA about 1250 A.D. In this work he has dealt with all matters pertaining to poetics except dramaturgy.

The work is very popular on account of its lucid and elegant style. It is in ten chapters called *Mayūkhās*. The fifth chapter dealing with *alāṅkāras* is very popular.

**ALAṄKĀRA-SĀRA-SĀNGRAHA** of Amṛtānanda-yogin is a comprehensive work of about this very period.

**THE RASĀRNĀVASUDHĀKARA** in three chapters dealing with sentiment and dramaturgy is by a Reddi ruler named Siṅgabhūpāla of the 14th cent. A.D. Bhānuḍatta's **RASATARĀNGIṄI** and **RASĀMANJARĪ** dealing mainly with sentiments belong to this period.

### VIDYĀNĀTHA (c. 1300 A.D.)

Vidyānātha, known also as Agastya, is the author of the **PRATĀPARUDRA-YASOBHŪṢĀNA**, more familiarly known as *Pratāparudriyam*. He is noticed earlier by us (p. 216). The work covers all topics of poetics and *Alāṅkāra*. The illustrations given are the author's own, composed to eulogise his patron Pratāparudradeva of Warrangal (1268-1328 A.D.). The work incorporates a small play called the *Pratāparudrakalyāṇa*. The work, because of its comprehensiveness and lucidity, is very popular.

The **EKĀVALĪ** of Vidyādhara belongs to the same period and is modelled on the *Kāvyaprakāśa*. The illustrations cited are in praise of a king named Narasimha of Utkal.

### VIS'VANĀTHA (14th cent. A.D.)

Vis'vanātha of Orissa wrote his **SĀHITYA-DARPAṄA** in ten chapters covering the entire field of poetics and dramaturgy. He generally follows

Mammata. He quotes profusely from the works of others and from his own other works such as *Kuvalayāsvacarita* — a Prākṛt poem, *Raghuvilāsa* — a māhākāvya, *Prabhāvatī* and *Candrakalā* — two nātikās, and *Narasimharājavijaya* — a historical poem. These works are not extant. The *Sāhityadarpana* is very popular and widely studied. Its style is lucid and elegant, while the treatment of the subject is exhaustive. The author belongs to the end of the 14th cent. A.D.

THE *SĀHITYACINTĀMĀNI* of Vemabhūpāla, the patron of Vamanabhattachāra and the *SĀHITYAKAUMUDĪ* of Vidyābhūṣaṇa are two other noteworthy works of this period.

### APPAYYADIKSITA (16th cent. A.D.)

Appayyadiksita, the well known poet and philosopher of southern India, wrote two works on *Alaṅkārasāstra*, viz., *KUVALAYĀNANDA* and *CITRAMIMĀMSA*. The first work is a commentary on the fifth chapter of Jayadeva's *Candrāloka*. Being a simple treatise of *Alaṅkāra* (figures of speech), the *Kuvalayānanda* is very popular and widely studied in South India. The second work, i.e., the *Citramimāmsa* is an original treatise on *Alaṅkāras*. It has two parts. In the first part, the author criticises all previous schools and in the second, he gives an elaborate and scientific treatment of *arthālaṅkāras*. This work was later on criticised by Jagannāthapāṇḍita in a ruthless manner, having been scorned, according to a traditional account, by Appayyadiksita on a certain occasion. *Vṛttivārtika* on the denotation of words is another work of Appayyadiksita.

The **KĀVYADARPAÑA** of Rājacūḍāmaṇidikṣita, with the author's own commentary, was written about the year 1600 A.D. The **UJJVALANĪLAMĀṇI** by Rūpadeva or Rūpagosvāmin belonging to the same period contains illustrations composed by the author himself in praise of Kṛṣṇa.

The **Alaṅkārakaustubha** of **Kavikarnapūra** and **Alaṅkāras'ekhara** of **Kes'avamis'ra** also belong to this period.

### JAGANNĀTHA PANDITA (1590-1665 A.D.)

Jagannāthapaṇḍita, known also as **Panditarāja** and noticed earlier by us as the author of the **Bhāmini-vilāsa** (page 150) and the five **LAHARĪS** (p. 144), has to his credit the highly reputed **RASA-GAṄGĀDHĀRA** which is recognised as a standard work on alaṅkāra. 'रसणीयार्थेप्रतिपादकः शब्दः काव्यम्' is his definition of poetry. He refutes the **DHVANI** theory and upholds the theory of sentiment. He boldly criticises the views of all those who differ from him, however eminent they may be. In the **CITRAMĀMSĀ-KHAṄDANAM**, which is another work of his, he has vehemently criticised Appayyadikṣita.

The **Alaṅkāraratnākara** written by **Yajñanārāyanadikṣita** is in praise of his patron **Raghunātha Nāik** (17th cent. A.D.) of Tanjore.

The **NAṄJARĀJAYAS'OBHŪṢANA** by **Narasimha-kavi**, also called **Abhinavakālidāsa**, in praise of king Nanjarāja of Mysore and the **RĀMAVARMA-YAS'OBHŪṢANA** by **Sadāśivamakin** eulogising king Rāmavarma of Travancore belong to the 18th cent. The **Alaṅkārābharaṇa** and the **Alaṅkārakaustubha** of **Vis'ves'vara** are of the same period.

## FEATURES OF THE HISTORY OF POETICS

Thus, during a period covering many centuries, the subject of the nature of poetry was considered from various standpoints and several theories were evolved. We will now point out two or three broad features of the history of this inquiry here.

Poetry has two aspects—the **IMAGINATIVE** and the **EMOTIONAL**. In fact these two are so blended together that it is not possible to separate them in practice. But a differentiation even in theory of these two aspects will enable us to follow the course of the history of poetics in India. We have noticed two schools of thought each opposing the other. While the one upholds the theory that the imaginative element should be predominant in poetry, the other maintains that the emotional element should. The first of these may be called the *Alaṅkāra* school, for, imagination furnishes the keynote of *alaṅkāras*; the second may be termed the *Rasa* school, *Rasa* being idealised emotion. Both the schools admit that there should be *RASA* as well as *ALAṄKĀRA* in all poetry worth the name. They differ only in the degree of stress that should be laid on them.

According to the *alaṅkāra* school the ultimate function of poetry is to stimulate our fancy; according to the other, it is to evoke emotion. These two schools are almost as old as literary criticism in India; and the controversies found in works on poetics can eventually be traced to this difference. In the earlier stages the *alaṅkāra* view prevailed but gradually the *Rasa* view triumphed. As a result the very complexion of the old question about

the 'nature of poetry' changed. When critics began to think about RASA, they discovered that it was essentially inexpressible. Emotions cannot be awakened except indirectly. This discovery led to the enunciation of the dhvani canon, according to which what is suggested is more important in art than what is explicitly stated. This suggestion may be of a vastu or of an alāṅkāra or of rasa, but the best is the last, viz., the Rasadhvani. Words and their meanings are the mere vesture of poetry, while its Ātmā is Rasa.

## CONCLUSION

We have given above just an outline of the history of classical Sanskrit literature. Besides the vast literature of the Vedic and Classical Sanskrit, there are plenty of authoritative works on the several philosophical systems and religions, on the positive sciences like the Jyautisa, Āyurveda, Arthasāstra, on the ancillary sciences such as Silpa (architecture), Yantra (machines), and on fine arts like music, dance etc. Every branch of knowledge worth the name (stealing included) has a rich literature of its own in Sanskrit. Thus Sanskrit literature is extensive. As M. Winternitz has said—“Sanskrit is not a ‘dead’ language even to-day. There are still at the present day a number of Sanskrit periodicals in India, and topics of the day are discussed in Sanskrit pamphlets. Also, the Mahābhārata is still to-day read publicly. To this very day poetry is still composed and works written in Sanskrit, and it is the language in which Indian scholars converse upon scientific

questions. Sanskrit at the least plays the same part in India still as Latin in the Middle Ages in Europe, or as Hebrew with the Jews.”<sup>3</sup>

Prof. Maxmuller’s words<sup>4</sup> about the advantage of studying Sanskrit run thus—“Take any of the burning questions of the day—popular education, higher education, parliamentary representation, codification of laws, finances, emigration, poorlaw, and whether you have anything to teach and to try, or anything to observe and to learn, India will supply you with a laboratory such as exists nowhere else. That very SĀMSKRĀTA the study of which may at first seem so tedious to you and so useless, if only you will carry it on will open before you large layers of literature, as yet almost unknown and unexplored, and allow you an insight into strata of thought deeper than any you have known before and rich in lessons that appeal to the deepest sympathies of the human heart.....Whatever sphere of the human mind you may select for your special study, whether it be language, or religion, or mythology, or philosophy, whether it be laws or customs, primitive art or primitive science, everywhere, you have to go to India, whether you like it or not, because some of most valuable and most instructive materials in the history of man are treasured up in India and in India only.”

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3. History of Indian Literature, I 45

4. Maxmuller— What can India Teach us, pp 13 & 15.

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